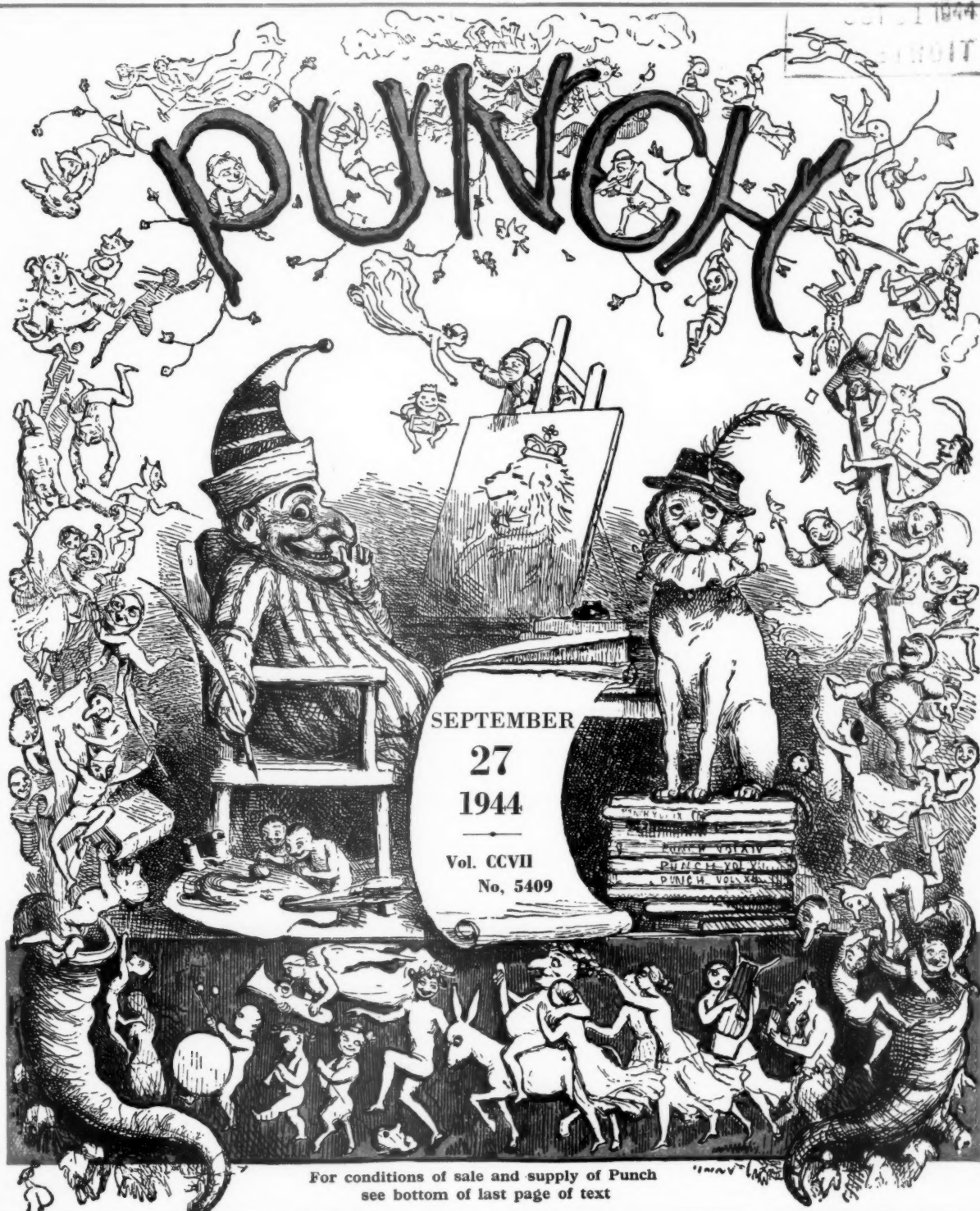


ALL CLASSES OF INSURANCE TRANSACTED
MOTOR UNION INSURANCE COMPANY LTD.
 10 ST. JAMES'S STREET, LONDON, S.W.1



LIBRARY



For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
 see bottom of last page of text



Imperial Typewriters

MADE IN
 GREAT BRITAIN

On the ONE hand

The slightly surrealist note in the picture indicates a problem. Ten years ago we introduced to British Industry the best Stop Nut in existence — the Simmonds fibre Stop Nut. It was hailed as an immense success and hundreds of millions of them have been and are still being supplied to many industries. But to-day the Simmonds Nut faces strong competition from the same stables, if we may use such a term to describe our somewhat modern Works and Offices. Why? Because we wouldn't leave well alone. Five years ago we started designing a different kind of Stop Nut — with a metal diaphragm — instead of the fibre insert. The result was the Pinnacle Nut. Now, which of them a designer should choose is a matter for him. But what is important is that he has the two to choose from. Two first-class Stop Nuts, both produced by Simmonds for the simple reason that we look, and shall always look, for new and better ways of doing a job.



NEW and
BETTER
ways

*** SIMMONDS ***

Simmonds Aerocessories Limited, Great West Road, London. A Company of the Simmonds Group.
LONDON · MELBOURNE · MONTREAL · PARIS · NEW YORK · LOS ANGELES

From the R.A.F. Wing in Russia



N.B.—The originals of all Testimonies used in Barneys' Advertisements can be inspected.

— Squadron
Sirs,

It might interest your people that I was with the R.A.F. Wing in Soviet Russia. Before going I had the foresight to purchase a large supply of Barneys' "Punchbowle," being my special brand of tobacco, which I smoked and duly enjoyed in the temperatures which were at times 25° below freezing point.

Yours faithfully,
—, Flight-Lieut.

Tribute to

JOHN SINCLAIR'S

Barneys

(262)

★ Barneys (medium), Parsons Pleasure (mild), Punchbowle (full strength), 2/9½ oz.

UNDER TWO FLAGS



MARINE BATTERIES

with power to spare

STARTER BATTERIES · AIRCRAFT BATTERIES
BUS BATTERIES · RADIO BATTERIES
STORAGE BATTERIES · TRACTION BATTERIES

OLDHAM & SON LTD · DENTON · MANCHESTER

ESTABLISHED 1865

ALSO DEPOTS AT LONDON, BIRMINGHAM & GLASGOW

GA

SUCH peaceful, happy scenes as this are, we hope, just round the corner. Then, with rationing ended, you'll really appreciate the meaning of the phrase

Sharp's the word for Toffee

EDWARD SHARP & SONS LTD. MAIDSTONE



MACKINTOSHES for the Services and Civilian wear

Moss Bros. have been making Service Mackintoshes these fifty years—time enough to have seen a few nasty downpours and prove their worth! They are scientifically made, cut to the accepted pattern for Navy, Army and R.A.F. (and for Women's Services too), and are supplied in all sizes. We need hardly add that they are also completely impervious to the dirtiest weather.

MOSS BROS

A CO. LTD.

Naval, Military & R.A.F. Outfitters

COVENT GARDEN

Corner of King St. and Bedford St.,
TEMPLE BAR 4477 W.C.2

Also at Manchester, Bristol, Aldershot,
Portsmouth, Camberley, York, Hove,
Bournemouth, etc.

JAEGER

1. Wool does not become damp like cotton or linen.
2. Wool is a slow conductor of heat and, therefore, is warmer in winter and cooler in summer.
3. Wool ventilates the skin and, therefore, keeps it in good condition.
4. Wool "gives," but goes back, and so makes you comfortable.
5. Wool is the natural, soft hair of sheep for clothing.
6. Vegetable fibres do not possess the qualities of wool.
7. Wool, therefore, is best.
8. See that you really get wool.

REMEMBER THESE FACTS

... and that JAEGER carries Style

Please Treasure Your

SPODE

CHINA, it is made to
Please as well as Serve



EDEN

"We plan to resume
production of this design
after the war."

Spode

The China of Distinction

W. T. COPELAND & SONS LIMITED
SPODE WORKS, STOKE-ON-TRENT

£6,530 FOR YOU AT AGE 55

Supposing, for example, you are a man aged 35 and you wish to provide for this amount to come to you at age 55. This is how the plan works out. You make regular monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or yearly payments of an agreed sum to the Sun Life of Canada, the great Annuity Company.

At 55 you will receive from the Sun Life of Canada a cheque for £6,530 plus accumulated dividends. Or you can have £400 a year for life from that age instead of the capital sum.

Income Tax Saved

On every payment to the Company you receive rebate of Income Tax, a concession which will save you a considerable sum during the period.

£5,000 for Your Family

Should you not live to the age of 55, £5,000, plus accumulated dividends, will be paid to your family.

Any Age, Any Amount

The plan may be varied to suit other ages and to provide larger or smaller incomes.

It is also available, in slightly different form, for women. Whatever amount you can save (from £1 a month) for your own and your family's future, this plan is the safest and most profitable you can adopt.

£645,276,000—Assurances in Force
Over 1,000,000 men and women enjoy the financial protection (for themselves and their families) guaranteed by policies, now amounting to £645,276,000, of the Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada—the largest Company of the British Empire transacting Life Assurance solely.

War Risk Cover available for Civilians depending upon Individual Circumstances
FILL IN THIS FORM NOW POSTAGE ONE PENNY IF UNSEALED

To H. O. LEACH (General Manager for British Isles)
SUN LIFE ASSURANCE CO. OF CANADA
(Incorporated in Canada in 1865 as a Limited Company)
22, Sun of Canada House, Pall Mall East, London, S.W.1

I should like to know more about your Income Plan, as advertised, without incurring any obligation.

NAME

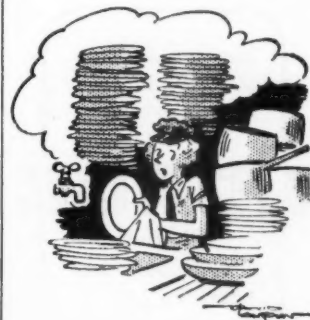
(Mr., Mrs. or Miss)

ADDRESS

Occupation

Exact date of birth

PUNCH, 27/9/44



"Thank goodness Hotpoint
are going to make life easier
after the War."

POST WAR

Hotpoint

ELECTRIC APPLIANCES
will be better than ever!

The Hotpoint Electric Appliance Co. Ltd.
Head Office: 24 Newman St., London, W.1
H.T. 4004



A Peek into the Past

Mr Peek and Mr Freaan are taking a peek at the ancestors of their wartime biscuits. How delicious 'FRUIT CREAM' was! Crisp biscuit, sweet fruit-jelly and vanilla cream. . . These pre-war favourites will be back again after victory when zoning and limitation of supplies will be merely a memory.

BY APPOINTMENT TO



H.M. KING GEORGE VI.

Peek Freaan's

BRITAIN'S CRISPEST BISCUITS

Made by Peek Freaan & Co. Ltd., makers of famous biscuits

THREE NUNS SAVES MONEY

—because of its
SLOW-BURNING CUT

There are two special reasons why "Three Nuns" Empire Blend Tobacco saves the smoker money. It is scientifically cut to burn slowly, each ounce lasts longer, you smoke fewer ounces a week. It is made from fine leaf which is favoured by the lower duty on Empire Tobacco. To enjoy the fullest pleasure of smoking at a moderate cost, take to "Three Nuns" Empire Blend.



Three Nuns

EMPIRE BLEND

2/6½ AN OUNCE

'Cut for economy'

Also **THREE NUNS**

Original

AT **2/10½ AN OZ.**

'The Vicar's Choice'

Issued by STEPHEN MITCHELL & SON, Branch of The Imperial Tobacco Co. (of Great Britain & Ireland), Ltd., St. Andrew Square, Glasgow. 465A

An outstanding
success in the
mighty engines
of war

LODGE

PLUGS

will soon be
sparking just as
successfully in the
pleasant pursuits
of peace



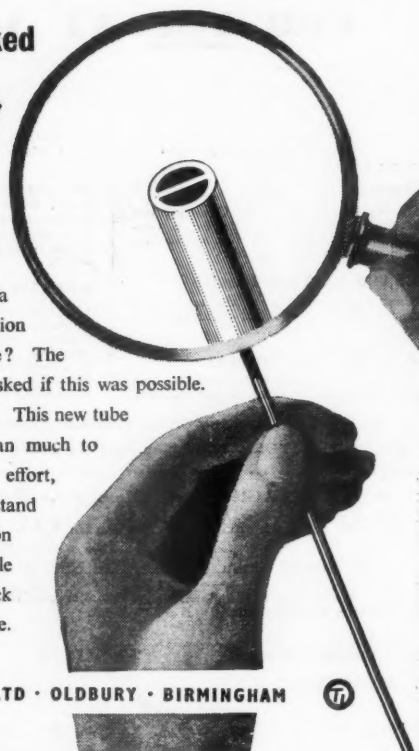
Lodge Plugs Ltd.,
Rugby, England

ACCLES & POLLOCK DO IT AGAIN

Research asked

"can it →
be done?"

Could we produce a tube of stainless steel, not much thicker than a match stalk, with a division right down the middle? The research department asked if this was possible. Well—we've done it. This new tube development may mean much to research and the war effort, but to all of us let it stand as yet another indication that there's precious little that Accles & Pollock can't do with a tube.



ACCLES & POLLOCK LTD · OLDBURY · BIRMINGHAM



Hurrah,
BERMALINE
BREAD
for tea!

Baked by
Good Bakers
everywhere

Good, pure
delicious food.
A treat to eat
—and easily
digested.

Enquiries to:
MONTGOMERIE & CO LTD · IBROX · GLASGOW

Drink
Red Hackle
and banish dull care
SCOTLAND'S BEST WHISKY
HEPBURN & ROSS KELVINDRIDGE GLASGOW

BY FAR
THE BEST
RONUK
SANITARY
POLISHES

FOR ALL
RHEUMATIC ILLS

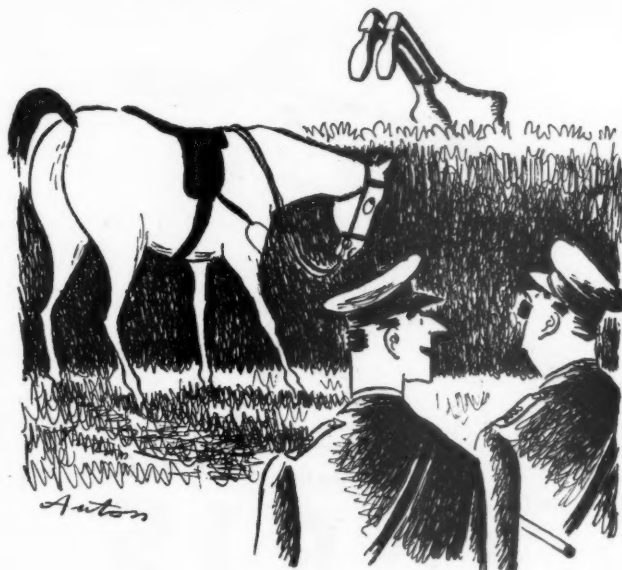
CURICONES

OBTAINABLE FROM ALL CHEMISTS

September 27 1944

PUNCH or The London Charivari

and at Saxone
they measure both feet



At Saxone we minister to the comfort of men. We measure both feet for Footprint shoes so that they fit perfectly and last longer.

SAXONE CIVIL AND SERVICE SHOEMAKERS

40 STRAND, 11 CHEAPSIDE, ETC., LONDON • SHOPS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY A.3

Brisker, fresher teeth-cleaning with a *Wisdom*

THIS is the Wisdom Toothbrush. Its anchored Nylon tufts give your teeth a brisker clean. Your teeth are really cleaner, your mouth feels fresher, after the tonic touch of Wisdom. No wonder Wisdoms are in such demand.

Wisdom
TOOTHBRUSH

OUTLASTS
THREE
ORDINARY
BRISTLE
BRUSHES

MADE BY ADDIS LIMITED, MAKERS OF
THE FIRST TOOTHBRUSH IN 1780



NOTE THE
SHAPE:
The brush is
shaped so
that all the
tufts come
into action
at once.



MARKING TIME



THEN...

About a thousand years B.C. the measuring of shadows caused by the sun led to the development of the sun dial.

NOW..

What is probably "the ultimate" in the marking of time is provided by the Ferranti Clock—impulsed from the electricity mains and absolutely accurate.

FERRANTI
Clocks

In the very unlikely event of your Ferranti Clock requiring attention send it to the Clock Servicing Department, Ferranti Ltd., Hollinwood, Lancs.



Stored away in "safety" there are countless Jewels, unworn, unseen. AND we have living men for whom necessities are urgently wanted... Prisoners of War, Sick and Wounded. A hidden treasure taken out of store and sent to the Treasurer, Red Cross Sales, 15 Old Bond Street, London, W.1, would help to meet that growing need through the Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross and St. John Fund. Send for the next

RED CROSS
Jewel Sale
AT CHRISTIE'S

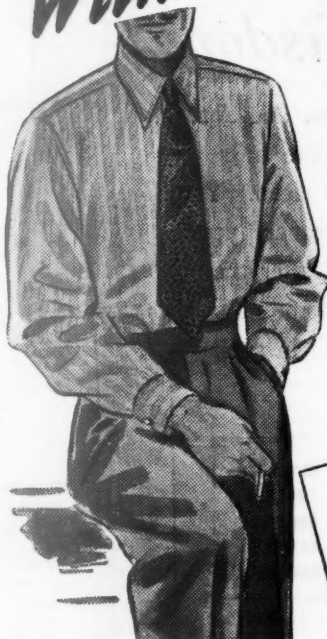


Registered under the War
Charities Act, 1940



THIS SPACE IS DONATED BY
Beechams Pills
Limited

With or without!



Take your choice, you can't go wrong! Simpsons, Piccadilly, offer a wide selection of shirts with collars attached or two separate collars. If out of town our specialists will be pleased to attend to your enquiries or orders by post. Collar-attached shirts from 18/5d. to 51/2d.—

5 coupons.

Shirts with 2 separate collars from 19/5d. to 52/11d.—

7 coupons.

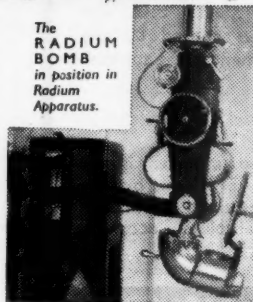
Mail orders delivery fee 1/-.


SIMPSON (PICCADILLY) LTD., 202, PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1. REG. 2002

LONDON WANTS
a
DIFFERENT
bomb!

A "bomb" that heals instead of hurts. A "bomb" that contains radium instead of high explosive and goes on saving life instead of destroying it. This RADIUM BOMB is urgently needed to play its vital part in the national task of fighting Cancer. YOUR immediate help is urged to raise the money to purchase it, for—this bomb costs £10,000. Please send a gift to the Secretary

The
 RADIUM
 BOMB
 in position in
 Radium
 Apparatus.



**The Royal
 Cancer Hospital**
 (FREE)

FULHAM ROAD - - LONDON, S.W.3

BE PREPARED

TO QUENCH THAT THIRST...



WHEN PEACE RETURNS... SO WILL

IDRIS

QUALITY SOFT DRINKS

IDRIS LIMITED, LONDON, MAKERS OF QUALITY
 TABLE WATERS THROUGH FIVE SUCCESSIVE REIGNS



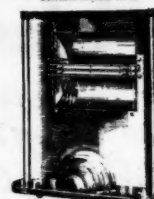
*Behind
 the amenities of modern life
 stands ELECTRICITY...
 and behind Electricity is
 the historic name of...*

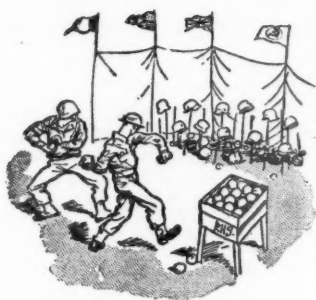
FERRANTI

PIONEERS IN RADIANT ELECTRIC FIRES
 and in most other aspects of Electrical Development

FERRANTI LTD · MOSTON · MANCHESTER · 10
 London Office: Kern House, 36 Kingway, W.C.2.

CORONA
 One of the post-war series of
 Ferranti Electric Fires

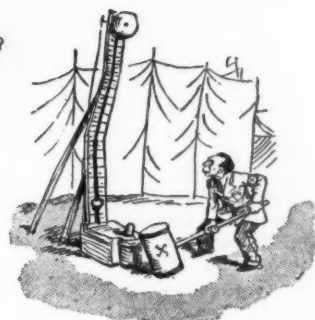




PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCVII No. 5409

September 27 1944

Charivaria

HITLER has sent his flags to be bleached.

o o

An everlasting match is to replace both the ordinary match and the petrol lighter. And it will be hundreds of times easier to forget to bring out with you than either of its forerunners.

o o

Practically nothing is now left in the field of diplomatic manoeuvre except for De Valera to warn the world that Eire is being encircled.

o o

Cobwebs are immensely strong, says a naturalist. So many motorists are finding when they try to crank up the car in the garage.

o o



A Cold Day for the Wedding

"Her bridesmaid wore a Tan Frock, trimmed Blue to tone with bride."—*Irish paper.*

o o

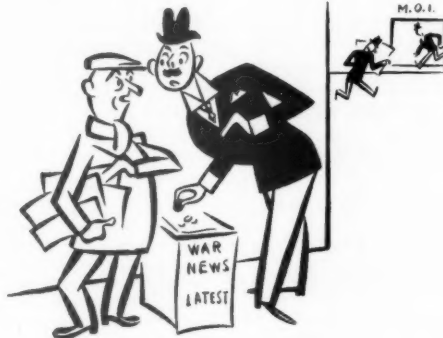
Post offices are now issued with less than half their pre-war quota of nibs. This will of course mean more pressure on the present supply.

o o

A City man tells us he spent most of his holiday standing by a rural railway-crossing watching the trains go by. He found it quite a change from standing by a bus-stop watching the buses.

o o

The authorities assure us they are sick of telling people who have been re-evacuated not to come back from the new billets they will not get next time if they don't stop in them now.



"How shall we recognize peace when it comes?" wonders a reader. Oh, there's bound to be some upset or other.

o o

The German card-index system seems to be out of gear. Last week a Nazi general died twice from the same mysterious disease.

o o

Dehydrated spinach is said to taste just like real spinach. Our scientists will have to do better than that.

o o

"There is a marked difference between pressing and ironing," says a home-page writer. And the mark won't come out, either.

o o



Plastic wallpaper has at last been perfected. It has been a sticky job getting it past the tacky stage.

o o

Inhabitants of occupied towns in Germany assure our troops that they have never liked the Nazis. The popularity of the Nazis is at a very low ebb. Even the people in this country who used to like them now can't remember when this was.

o o

This Week's Understatement

"Carpet, 3 ft. x 3 ft., lovely pattern; pattern slightly worn in one part, but could be covered by a hearthrug. . ."

Advt. in Scottish paper.

o o

A newspaper seller has had the same pitch in Bloomsbury for thirty years. His sales have shown a steady increase since the opening of the Ministry of Information.

How Clean Was My Billet.

I AM packing my spare socks and my clean laundry in my old valise—I hope—and I'm going from the billet that has been so much a home to me for nearly two months. There is strange it is to look back over that period of time, the longest spent in any one place, and to bring back—as the thought of draught beer brings water to the mouth—all the memories these four bare walls can conjure up.

Enough to bring the tears smarting to the eyes it is, some of the thoughts the smallest things about me throw up to my mind. This table, now, on whose bare white top I am writing, clean and white as the day I first placed it in this room.

Proud I was when I had it through the doorway, and with what loving care I covered it with a copy of the *Eighth Army News* before laying out my small kit. Proud, indeed, for I had been down to old Ellis the Store, where there were tables and forms leaning up against the wall and old Ellis himself like a bald-headed red-faced old vulture jealous of his wares and sparing in his generosity. Oh, dammo! A hard, grasping man was Ellis the Store, the only lightness about him being the shine of the crown topping the three stripes on his arm.

Even the leaden passage of time cannot take from me the recollection of the trepidation with which I went to him, with faltering step and a vain attempt to feel like a superior officer, and oh! the smallness of the voice and the clammy sweat of the hands as I asked him for one of his fine tables for my bedroom. Cold was his eye and colder still his voice, warm only the smell of *vino* with him as he looked me up and down.

"Now, look you, sir. It is tables for the mess-rooms and offices there is: for officers' bedrooms, no tables isn't it?"

And then the smoothness of the tongue, and the pleading of the eye, and the passing of the note, and quick as you like, up with a table under my arm and out through the back door as tidy as the cat from the fire when a cinder falls, with old Ellis the Store, in a loud hoarse whisper, saying not to let the old man know.

Though, mind you, many the time the old man has rested his glass on this very table and not a word said except his usual talk of getting once more into his best, with his bowler — hat.

I am glad I took down that nail six-inch from the wall. The mark barely shows now, but it comes just about the fourteenth rose-bush down and the twelfth from the corner. I know all those old rose-bushes by heart now, and as long as there is breath in me I shall think of those roses as I saw them the morning after Evans the Headquarters got made into a major. Never did rose-bushes behave as these did then. They swirled round the walls, chased each other round and round, with the lower ones coming up strongly behind the middle ones and the middle ones on the tails of the upper ones, and round and round again, and each time round ringing a bell in my head until the whole billet seemed to be rose-bushes and bells. And then the sweet taste of a cup of tea and the quick swallow as the aspirin goes down.

But there I go again, as I said, one memory chasing another just like those old rose-bushes.

That nail will go with me again, wherever I travel, to hang up the mosquito-net. And there's a thing for you. Rolled neat and white it looks as tidy as you could wish, but hang it on the nail and stretch it over the bed and it comes alive and gathers the wickedness from all around it.

Meant to cover you up it is, but no! First the end is up and the toes are out, and then the side is untucked, and just as you get it neat and straight again—dammo!—if all the mosquitoes aren't in the net instead of outside. Put the mosquitoes in the net, I say, and sleep on the outside.

Laughs we had in the mess that day when Thomas the Platoon came back from the malaria course. There is a big mess we were just then and crowded was the room. Cheering and shouting there was when Thomas came in. All were talking at once and asking him what he had been doing and what they had told him. And then he started to tell us that it wasn't the old mosquitoes that bit you but something called *Anophyles*, and that they could only bite in the dark, and all with a face so straight and solemn in the telling that we couldn't help laughing. A comedian he was! Laughter rose from our stomachs and into our throats, cracking the wrinkles and making the eyes slits, with beer running down our chins and making puddles in our laps. And beer so hard to come by to here, mind you, only a pint a month and most of that gone in the opening of the bottles. Sense we have learnt since then it is, never to laugh and drink beer at the same time.

Ellis the Store has just been in with his little book and the gold pencil he says he got from an Indian rajah. Wondering, I have always been, as to where the rajah was looking when Ellis got it. A quick look he has given at the old wash-basin let into the recess in the wall. There is sadness it is, to think I shall be leaving behind my wash-basin. Oh! but there was a shine in my eye when I first came into the room and saw that fine basin, and the excitement with which I turned on the taps marked *FREDDA* and *CALDA*, and the laughter that isn't laughter as nothing happened. There was a gaping hole too in the bend of the side, but a nice tidy bit of tin, some insulation tape from the old tool-box, and a few O.H.M.S. sticky labels, and there it was, a wash-basin fit for a king indeed. Then a four-gallon non-returnable petrol tin, with the top cut out and a skilfully rounded piece of wood for a handle, to bring up the water from the tanker, and the taps could go hang for all I cared.

I am going from the billet, back to the brown fields and the ants and the lizards, with the tent shining grey above me, and the dust that turns to mud when it rains, and the heat of the sun will strike down on the canvas and the steam will rise from the earth.

Sad is my heart and heavy, leaving my wash-basin and the fine table which will now be used by the cooks for mixing the cement with the flour for the pastry.

Clean, clean was my billet, and the memory of the roof and four walls will last with me.

And now I must go—voices of wrath are calling me—and not a thing packed!

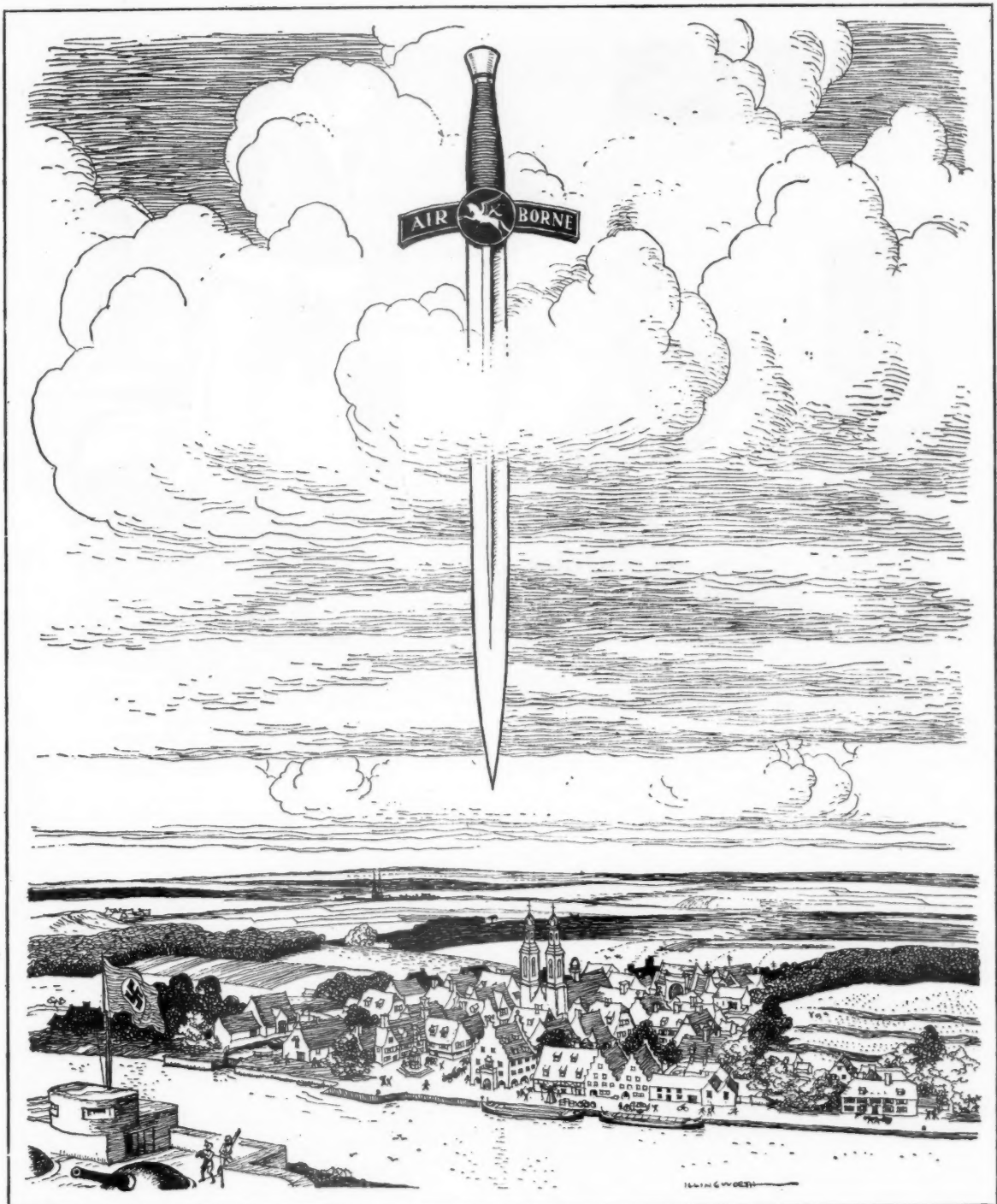
There is a life it is!

o o

1530 and All That

"Bluff King Hall had yet to put away Catholic Catherine of Aragon, but was already breaking up the Church monasteries and preparing to establish the Protestant Church of England.

Then he became first chairman of the Securities & Exchange Commission under Franklin Roosevelt, first chairman of the Maritime Commission, and last peacetime Ambassador to the Court of St. James."—*Australian paper*.



THE NTH ARMY



"Perhaps I should introduce myself—I am Detective-Sergeant Thompson of the Criminal Investigation Department."

Ballade of Notable Employment

WHEN life is laden with dispraise and blame

And nothing comes of all the good I try,
When patient merit takes the meed of shame
And hour by hour the wounding insults fly,
I think of days (and stem the threatened sigh)
When Fate relented and I knew success:
I too have tasted greatness, even I;
I was a waiter in the Sergeants' Mess.

What weird example bade them choose my name,
A halting poet, maladroit and shy?
They recked not Vulcan, though he too was lame
And made sweet laughter for his peers on high;
And Ganymede, whose ease upon the eye
Drew down the eagle—him they recked still less:

My face, I think, was *not* the reason why
I was a waiter in the Sergeants' Mess.

Too rarely sated is the thirst for fame:

My net the while was spread for larger fry;
I dreamt of deeds to win a wide acclaim,
Of lasting praise, and glory slow to die:
Of bombers plucked from out a thundering sky
Of rescue borne to armies in distress,
Of thrilling duels with a master-spy;
I was—a waiter in the Sergeants' Mess.

Envoi

Prince, on a certain Guest-Night in July
You brought disgrace upon your service dress.
Expect a touch of blackmail by and by;
I was a waiter in the Sergeants' Mess.

The Battle of Killahoo

I WAS discussing the war news the other day with my friend O'Hara, whom I chanced to meet on the road, when he said: "The most terrible battle I ever seen was the battle of Killahoo."

"What battle was that?" I asked.

"I'll tell you," he said. "It was like this. There was Michael O'Raherty. You know him? Well it was he himself. And he'd left a rabbit by the side of the road that he'd taken out of a snare. And there was Hanrahan coming along, a terrible great man too. And Hanrahan picks up the rabbit, and the two of them met. And O'Raherty says to Hanrahan 'Give me that rabbit.'"

"And Hanrahan says 'I will not.' And it began like that. It was a most terrible great battle."

"How many men were engaged in it?" I asked.

"Sure, it isn't the number of men engaged that makes a battle," said O'Hara, "but it's the terrible fury of the men that do be in it. That's what makes war. And don't be asking me questions, for they might put me out in my memory, and you might lose the account of the most terrible great battle that was ever fought in all the history of wars. Well, Hanrahan says 'I will not.' And O'Raherty says 'By the great bull of Coolan and by all the stars in the sky, and by earthquake and thunder, but you will.'"

"And Hanrahan says 'Never for any man.' And he takes a firmer hold on the rabbit, and draws out a knife. And while he was opening the blade of it as well as he could, for he wouldn't put down the rabbit, O'Raherty says to him 'Me that have stood up against the might of the whole English army! And you draw a knife on me.' And Hanrahan says 'Aye, and it's for your heart.' And O'Raherty says 'And a little knife like that.'"

"Now the battle hadn't properly begun, for Hanrahan had said nothing as yet, but now he began to speak, and he says 'Little knife is it? And stood up to an army, have you? Then you'll not stand up to me, and you'll not keep this knife out of your heart; and if it's too small to whip out your heart with one cut, I'll make as many cuts as may be necessary.'"

"Begob," says O'Raherty, "if it comes to knives, sure I have a knife of my own, and here it is, and it will whip your heart out of you and your gizzard as well, unless you give up that rabbit!"

"And Hanrahan says to him, 'Not for a hundred armies.'"

"Had O'Raherty really a knife?" I asked.

"He had," said O'Hara. "But he didn't show it much, because I'm thinking it was only an old bit of a thing that he used to cut tobacco, and maybe a bit blunt, so he opened it and held it in his hand, but didn't show it too much. Ah, what did the knife matter, anyway? Sure it was the terrible things he said, and the anger of him boiling in the black deeps of his heart; those were the things that made the battle so terrible. And he goes up closer to Hanrahan, and Hanrahan takes one step back so as to give himself fair room to plunge his knife into O'Raherty's heart. And O'Raherty says to him 'And I'll tell you what I'll do with your gizzard when I've whipped it out of you. I'll make you eat it before I cut your heart out, and I'll leave your heart in the centre of this road as a memorial of the kind of man that I am, and a warning to all that pass by.'"

"If it's the passers-by that you're thinking of," says Hanrahan, "take care they won't slip in your blood, for it isn't only your heart that I'll cut

out, but I'll bleed you like a pig all down the middle of this road that you're standing on now."

"And O'Raherty says 'You and your little knife! I that have faced an army and have no fear of the Day of Judgment.'"

"And when he spoke slightly of the knife a great change came over Hanrahan, for he felt more about that old knife than he did of his heart. And he lowered his hand with the knife in it and opened his mouth, and I saw from the look in his eyes that he was about to utter the most terrible great oath that would have blasted O'Raherty and maybe the land all round him. A terrible great oath. And O'Raherty stood waiting for it. And just at that moment Hanrahan changed his mind, and I saw he wasn't going to utter that oath after all. And then he says 'Ah, sure I'll not be bothered with you.' And he walks away down the road."

"And what happened to the rabbit?" I asked.

"Ah, sure they forgot it," said O'Hara, "and Hanrahan threw it away. They forgot it in the heat of the battle. Sure, I ate that rabbit myself."

ANON.



"... but with a very heavy load we go 'PUFF—PUFF—PUFF—PUFF—PUFF—PUFF PUFF PUFF PUFF—PUFF—PUFF—PUFF—PUFF—PUFF—PUFF PUFF PUFF PUFF PUFF—PUFF—PUFF—PUFF—PUFF—PUFF—PUFF PUFF PUFF,' and so on."

At the Pictures

NEW DEPARTURES

Double Indemnity (Director: BILLY WILDER) is a good, strong, satisfying, absorbing and excellently - done murder story of the kind that it is usual to describe as "sordid" (an adjective often applied to stories of murders that give an impression of authenticity, as distinct from the house-party, butler-and-cheerful-detective sort). This, to be blunt and misleading, is the account of the murder of a man for his insurance by his wife and her lover; but it is as far as possible from being one of those gloomy pictures that you (according to your habit and temperament) either see merely because you feel it your duty to keep up with the Art of the Film, or fail even to contemplate seeing in the first place. This is profoundly, intensely entertaining: it has a firm and ingenious plot, and it is both visually and intellectually exciting, played and directed with a stimulating brilliance, and enlivened by dialogue often startlingly funny. FRED MACMURRAY, usually given light-comedy "hero" parts, has never played better than he does here as the smart, slick, wisecracking insurance-agent, gradually inveigled into murder by the flashy viperish siren (intimidatingly portrayed by BARBARA STANWYCK in a blonde wig). EDWARD G. ROBINSON's rôle as the insurance claims investigator who keeps worrying at the case is secondary, but full of first-class Robinsonian fire. I enjoyed the whole thing.

As the title shows, *An American Romance* (Director: KING VIDOR) is devoted to the telling of a typically American story, of the kind of life that the U.S. system more than any other has long encouraged. Simply and at some length: the picture lasts two hours, during which *Steve Dangos* (BRIAN DONLEVY) grows steadily older—though not

particularly in appearance—richer and better at speaking English. It is a new departure for Mr. DONLEVY to play a part of this kind, and very well he does it, from the early days (around 1900) when *Steve* the Slovene immigrant

the girl (ANN RICHARDS) who first showed him how the encyclopædia would satisfy his curiosity about steel, his partnership with his son's school-master (WALTER ABEL) in the making and marketing of an inexpensive car, his troubles with The Men over unions, his sulky retirement as a defeated individualist, and his return after Pearl Harbour. The best parts of the picture, and they are good, come under the heading of documentary: the mining of the ore, the milling of the steel, and the assembly-line work on the cars and (climax) bombers. The piece is in Technicolor and all this is highly impressive as well as informative and good to look at. But as a story it hardly holds one's attention. Soon after his arrival in the States *Steve* learns with awe that his son could grow up to be President, and the picture perhaps shows a certain restraint in stopping before a son or even a grandson has shown signs of being on the way towards attaining that position; for the whole aim of it is to boost The American Way.

Unfortunate whiffs of ARTHUR MARSHALL's burlesque girls'-school stories scent the atmosphere of *Two Thousand Women* (Director: FRANK LAUNDER), which is about a German internment camp for British women in France. The treatment seems altogether unsuitably light for such a subject; and the story itself has an almost juvenile insouciance. There are good amusing lines, but they tend to be treated as separate cracks, not properly worked into the fabric of a sequence. Many of them are of the kind wherein one person smartly scores off another, and the manner of their delivery—with curling lip, sparkling eye and self-dramatizing air, as of one striking a blow against Fascism—becomes in time a bit wearing, however lovely the speaker may be. The more pawky observations fall to RENEE HOUSTON and REGINALD PURDELL, who have (and are) about the best of the picture. It's an odd, unsatisfactory, irritating piece. R. M.



J.H.D.W.D.

[Double Indemnity]

HOLDERS OF A DO-IN POLICY

Walter Neff	FRED MACMURRAY
Phyllis Dietrichson	BARBARA STANWYCK
Mr. Dietrichson	TOM POWERS

first appears, having walked from New York to the Mesabi iron-ore pits of Minnesota, to the end, when we leave him nobly managing an aeroplane factory in this war. Meanwhile we have watched his rise, his marriage to



J.H.D.

[An American Romance]

LONG-LOST COUSINS

Steve Dangos	BRIAN DONLEVY
Anton Dubeck	JOHN QUALEN

Our Open Forum

I—Is Industry Too Secretive?

Professor Hubert Moot, who makes this first important contribution to our study of the problems of reconstruction, is forty-three and the son of an East Anglian wages clerk. He is fearless and uncompromising, makes enemies easily and drops his friends like silent aitches. He is fond of gardening and light meals.

SECRETIVENESS, my friends, is a characteristic of the British people. In matters of finance and business dealings we are as close as oysters. This is bad.

As a nation a large part of our exports are "invisible." As business men we arrange our balance sheets so that the significant items are "hidden." As individuals we carry discretion so far that the size of our incomes is often hidden even from our wives. More than once during this war I have met cases where women have refused to divulge the details of their bonuses and overtime rates even to their husbands. Time, my friends, brings in its revenges.

Some of us hide even the nature of our work. We are "something in the City," "in hardware," or "on the Turf." Sometimes our evasion is so complete that we are merely "in business."

Why is this? In part, I think, our love of concealment is a legacy of the heavily-curtained privacy of Victorianism. Fifty years ago it was the ambition of every young man to sit behind a door marked "Private" and to receive letters marked "Private and Confidential." But the dictaphone has largely replaced the private secretary and income tax has ceased to be a joke.

Have you noticed, my friends, how few are the "Business as Usual" notices in the fly-bombed windows of London? In 1940-41 the visitations of the *bombe ordinaire* brought them out everywhere like printers' rash. The change is due to the manly exertions of the Detector Service of the Inland Revenue Department. The earlier blitz caught the business man off his guard. After a lifetime of caution he was mad enough, in those days of heroics, to let the world know that his business was as usual. The Commissioners of Inland Revenue read and swooped. To-day the blitzed merchant is more circumspect. Every one of the following notices may be seen

within a stone's throw of Trafalgar Square:

"Business Unusual"

"Our Premises, like our Receipts, are Down; but our Tails, like our Taxes, are Up"

"Come In: You Needn't Buy—Few Do"

"Business is Casual"

I appeal, as never before, for more artlessness in industry. Let us disguise nothing; let us put our record-cards on the table—face upwards. I want to see balance sheets, if necessary, that don't balance. I want every wife to know just how much her husband is getting. I want fair play for trousers

pockets. I want to see advertisements like this:

"NECKTAR"

(Registered Trade Mark)

A tonic, a food, a stimulant, a substitute for marking-ink

Each carton contains: Water (90 %), Salt (9 %), Powdered Chalk (5 %), Congealed Porridge (5 %).

Price, Three shillings (including Two shillings profit).

I want every inhabitant of these islands to spurn ingenuity and woo ingenuousness. I want masses of data.

Above all, my friends, I want to make Britain a land fit for economists and statisticians to thrive in.



"There's a rumour that clothes rationing's ending—we'd all better hurry and use up our coupons."



"Excuse me—you've got baked beans on toast filed under stewed prunes and custard."

H. J.'s Dramatic Fragments

THE Fragment which is introduced by this introduction emerged from an imbroglio we produced when on holiday. We were staying at an hotel called "The Date Palm Court," and it was a very rich kind of hotel indeed, having different lifts for going up and coming down, and a large choice of headings on the note-paper in the writing-room. One day at dinner B. Smith lit some table fireworks he had made, and while no one took much notice of the Giant Whizz-Bang, trouble arose when he set light to a "Serpent's Egg." While we were absorbed in having an argument on the kind of loom used by the Lady of Shalott and what precaution she would have had to use to produce a web and not something solid like tweed, the head of the snake worked its way from our table across the floor and into the salad of another diner, who complained raucously that the lettuce had not been scrubbed. On arrival, the chef burst into tears, being very highly strung by education at an experimental school, where they would not let him indulge in compulsory games, on which he had set his heart owing to reading school stories; so my wife made me write a Fragment in his autograph book to console him.

THE STRANGE DRAMA OF THE LAMA'S LLAMA (The scene is a Session of the House of Commons.)

MINISTER FOR FLOOD AND FIRE. In the event of an inundation's freezing, application for permission to skate thereon should in the first instance be made to the Ministry and thereafter to such departments of the Ministry as the Ministry may specify in reply to communications initiated in accordance with the first part of this answer.

MEMBER FOR KING'S CROSS. Will the Minister undertake to hire skates?

MINISTER FOR FLOOD AND FIRE. Yes, sir. Skates of a pattern authorized by the Ministry or one of the Secretaries of State may be issued by Local Authorities to bona-fide members of the public on payment of a sum to be agreed or otherwise determined.

MEMBER FOR WATERLOO. Will the Minister consider reducing this charge in cases of hardship?

MINISTER FOR FLOOD AND FIRE. Yes, sir. The following priority classes will be able to obtain a rebate on application to regional tribunals shortly to be established: (a) Old Age Pensioners, (b) Parents of Old Age Pensioners, (c) Persons who by reason of skill or proficiency are able to skate for substantial periods on one leg, (d) Persons who for any other reason may be entitled to such rebate.

MEMBER FOR EUSTON. Is the Minister of Sound aware that Britain has not yet signed the draft convention on the notes of the octave, and what action does he propose to take?

MINISTER OF SOUND. While expressing their general sympathy with the aims of the convention His Majesty's Government does (shouts of "Do") not find themselves (shouts of "Itself") able to accept to the full the proposed restriction of notes to seven. It is hoped that with goodwill some common basis for agreement may be found, whereby while the notes A to G retain the primacy which they have long enjoyed, the door should not be closed to new creations, and a small Committee of Jurists is now elaborating a definition of quasi-tonic status which may well prove a fruitful landmark in these negotiations.

MEMBER FOR VICTORIA. Is the President of the Board of Recreation aware of the gross neglect of facilities for communal diversion in the rural areas of the Lake District?

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF RECREATION. Far be it from me to suggest that the limits of recreational provision have been reached in this area, but I must point out that considerable advances have in fact been made. A number of small fish capable of being caught with officially approved worms have been introduced into the waters referred to in the question. A hand-list of words suitable for use in local Spelling Bees has been drawn up, and a series of coloured lithographs of the poet Wordsworth has been commissioned from well-known artists. An exhibition of those already completed will shortly be on view in the Members' Aviary.

MEMBER FOR CANNON STREET. What about a band?

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF RECREATION. The provision of bands is not at the moment contemplated, pending the Report of the Commission on the waterproofing of musical instruments. The services of a travelling ventriloquist have, however, been retained and will shortly become available.

AN HON. MEMBER. Why not at once?

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD. He's having his tonsils out.

THE SPEAKER. That concludes the Questions. The House will now proceed to the consideration of the Basic Morse (Scottish Option) Bill.

FINIS

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"All right then, Mrs. Scrubbs—but when you've finished with the pin would you please put the 153rd Armoured Division back where you found it."

Swordfish

BETWEEN a cloud and a cloud
I saw you glide
in that last light, lees of the cup of day,
your good old "Peggy"* bumbling away:
the sky, and the night, and the sea beneath you, wide
and lonely, three infinities of grey.

But you had purpose, Swordfish. You were going
about your business at that steady amble
which seems so comic to those who have not seen
your shaking, snaking path when you are throwing
yourself about the sky, shell-bursts between
each bank,
or out-turning a fighter in the gamble
for hitting-space,
you fraud of a Stringbag, you.

What can you do with a Stringbag?
What *can't* you do?
You can aerobat; you can stand her on her tail;
go into a vertical dive—and pull out sweetly
(you won't find the Stringbag doing a high-speed stall!),
You can take her up in any weather at all
that can be flown in,
you can trust her completely
even if visibility's next to nil,
or you have to land in a mid-Atlantic gale.
Whatever the job you give her, she will not fail—

* "Peggy"—affectionate nickname for the Bristol Pegasus engine which powers the Fairey Swordfish.

if there are kills to be made she'll be in at the kill.
Bombing? She carries more than a Blenheim does—
and watch her spot for the guns of the Battle Fleet!
She'll torpedo a cruiser as soon as she gets the buzz,
and (you ask Doenitz!) the U-boats are her meat.
Oh, they spoil you for other aircraft for good, do Swordfishes—

they've always looked obsolescent; they've never been
obsolete;

they give a fellow the feeling of confidence and ease
like a seasoned pipe, or a dog you've trained, or old shoes
kind to the feet.

For crews have learned to trust them who have had time
to learn:

in long lone hours of night flight when the sky is a dry-
point plate

as in the infinite instant of the first evasive turn
after the fish strikes water, and they open up on the crate.

Well. They've stopped producing Stringbags. And
doubtless They know best.

I'll fly the kites they give me—and think of my earliest
love.

They're grand are the Barracudas, and the Seafires, and
the rest,

but—I know what the Psalmist meant, now, when he sighed
for the wings of a dove.

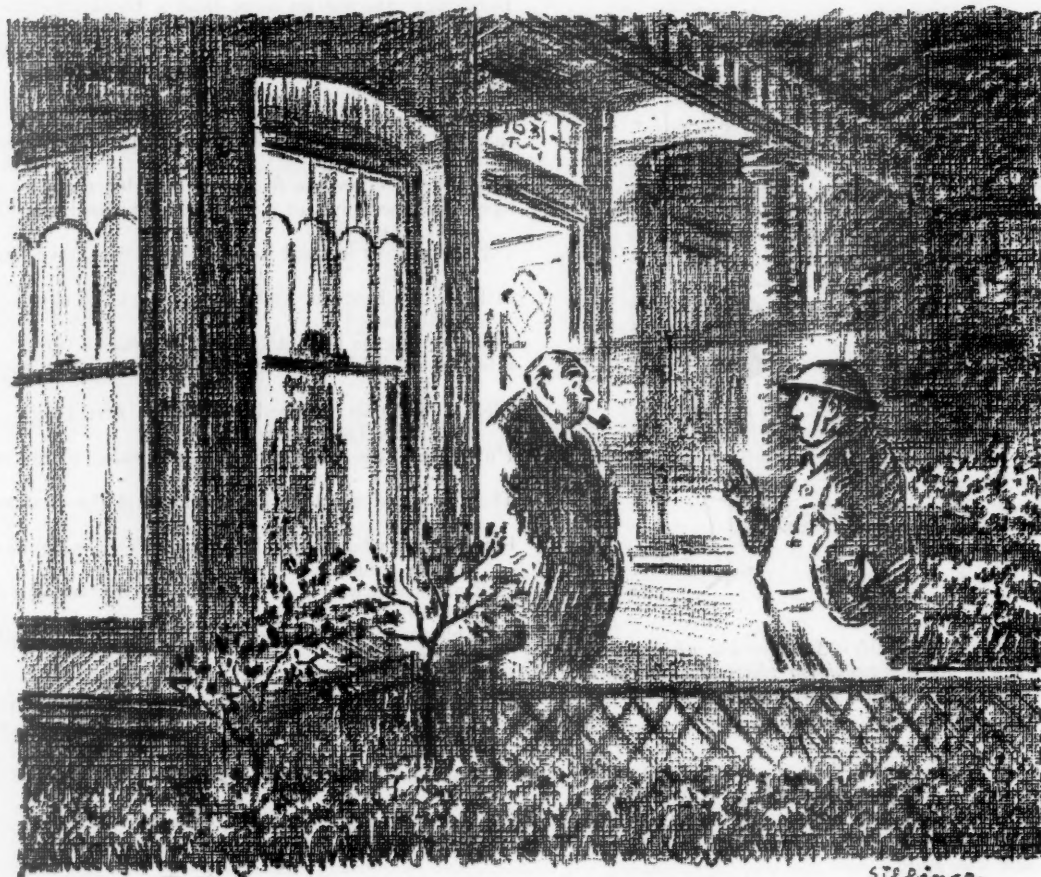
And after the war is over, when the Brave New World
appears

with planes to suit all pockets, and a seat in a sky-train's
cheap,

if I cannot purchase a Stringbag to solace my latter years—
as, once, men took to a bathchair, perhaps I'll take to
a Jeep.

R. C. S.





"I'm afraid you'll have to modify your modified black-out."

The Quitter

IN an age just after Noah's, Ruth became a Land Girl so as
To assist her kinsman Boaz when he reaped his
barley crop;
And, no doubt, she loathed the tickles that arise from
barley-prickles—
Worse perhaps in days of sickles—but that did not make
her stop.
In her efforts she persisted, set up ephahs wisp-entwisted,
Dreamed of home but never missed it, laboured for her
humble hire,
Let no harvest-bugs annoy her more than E-boats a
destroyer,
And, espousing her employer, made him David's great-
grandsire.

Other people, not so stable, run through history and fable
Ever since the tower of Babel, hating barley (minus bree),
Laggard reapers, more unlucky, from Judea to Kentucky,
Find that barley makes them yucky (sanctioned by the
N.E.D.)

Even seeing it for hours, weaving it by four grey
towers
Daily is a task that sours and is sure to sow soul-rot
One went ultimately dotty—not through going Lancelotty—
Barley-stitching made her potty, poor old Lady of
Shalott.

Recently I offered service to a kinsman, Mr. Purves,
Set up sheaves and forked with verve his beastly barley
to a cart,
With one native, gaunt and toothless, seven boys (I now
love youth less)
While my kinsman (who was ruth-less) sat and drove with
kindly heart.
But I find I'm only human, I'm no Moabitish woman,
And it needs no great acumen my departure to foresee;
Reapers may have reached the altar, some would rather
reach a halter;
One, at least, was a defaulter. One day proved enough
for me.
J. B. N.



WARNING—DANGER AHEAD



"Dear Mum, I'm not allowed to tell you where I'm writing this, but I'm scared stiff the darned thing is going to topple over on me."

Lady Addle's Domestic Front

Bengers, Herts, 1944

MY DEAR, DEAR READERS, —An appalling tragedy has just descended upon our family, of which I hardly dare write, yet something stronger than me compels me to tell the truth, however bitter. My dear sister Mipsie has been arrested for dealings with the black market!

What my feelings are as I pen these words may well be imagined! Our family have always been *sans peur et sans reproche*—at any rate from this kind of scandal. It is true the seventh Earl Coot, in 1784, was imprisoned for throttling a valet, and Lady Idina Coot, in 1820, was heavily fined for selling one of her children to pay a gambling debt, but these were mistakes at least in keeping with the dignity of the aristocracy, and not therefore the stain on the family honour that a charge of this kind presents. Poor impetuous generous Mipsie! Even her ex-husbands must weep for her now—the ones still alive of course I mean.

Because I need hardly say that it is that very impetuosity and generosity that has betrayed her. She herself is incapable of a dishonourable action—but I will tell the whole story.

It will be remembered that I mentioned in these pages some time ago a Firewatchers' Dance Club in which Mipsie was interested. I did not know then that she herself was the promoter and organizer of the whole thing. It was just another one of her brilliant conceptions born of an ardent desire to help humanity. The dance club was not for those who were actually firewatching—Mipsie would be the last person to distract men from their duty to King and Country—but for those who said they were firewatching, and in reality sought a little sorely needed relaxation and change from the routine of home life. Yet with that capacity for detail which is said to be the hallmark of genius she saw to it that the room contained sufficient evidence of the members'

being on firewatch to satisfy anyone who was suspicious enough to intrude. Thus, round the walls stood water containers, with tin hats in artistically arranged groups hung above them. In between these were sand buckets, stirrup pumps and fire shovels. There was even a real fire engine which was converted into a bar. Mipsie was never entirely happy about this latter object, as she was unfortunately never able to obtain a licence for the club, which was in the cellar of a blitzed warehouse in Mayfair, by the way. Conscientious to a fault, she wished no slur, no smallest taint of dishonour to fall upon her club and its members, so she arranged for the fire engine quickly to be turned over to the distribution of tea and coffee only in the event of occasional visits from members' wives or the police.

Of course she sought the best of everything for her war-working men-folk. What woman worthy of the name would not? So when people

offered her butter and eggs and sugar and hams she very naturally accepted them, never grudging the price she had to pay for them. How should she—a duchess, chataleine of Briskett Castle, hostess of a thousand parties in New York and Newport—how should she be able to think in the small mundane terms of rations and food points? Her soul was too big.

It was the same with clothes. She made a point of being at The Alert, as the club was called, as many nights as possible—no lazy deputizing for Mipsie—and naturally she would not wish to let her dear members down, for loyalty is the very core of her being, by appearing too often in the same dress. Friends offered to procure her new ones without coupons. Trustingly she agreed. Reckless and foolish she may have been—she was always adorably heedless of practical matters—but who shall blame her for the very impetuosity and wide-eyed confidence in the good faith of her friends that has always been part of her innate charm?

The end came, as so often in poor Mipsie's career, through the enmity of a woman. A guest member in the A.R.P. had presented her with a brooch commemorating his war service, in the form of "Heavy Rescue" in brilliants. Unfortunately his wife, who had become suspicious of her husband's frequent absence from home in the evenings, traced him to The Alert, where the first person she saw was Mipsie, wearing the brooch. Immediately she declared that the whole idea of having "Heavy Rescue" in diamonds had been hers, that her husband had promised to have it made for her for her birthday, and that Mipsie must have got the jewel instead by some means more foul than fair. High words followed, and the wife left the club that night a bitter revengeful enemy of my poor sister's.

After that matters moved with a terrible and fatal swiftness. Mipsie, fearing trouble, immediately dismantled the bar and declared the club closed for two nights. But before she could take any more precautions the police were in The Alert, making a fuller investigation than on any previous visit.

Alas, they found only too much. In the tin hats on the walls were stocks of butter and eggs, the hollow shaft of every shovel was filled with sugar, a ham lay hidden in each false-bottomed sand bucket. As for the stirrup pumps, they were all laid out to beer barrels, while every water container was discovered to be filled to the brim with gin. (Half a guinea had been charged for lifting the lid, to members—one

guinea to non-members.) People of course always think the worst in this harsh world, and I fear that the authorities interpreted her conduct as underhand, for she was not even allowed bail.

I have just been to see her in prison. She is shaken, but wonderfully calm and resigned. Indeed her gratitude for even small things brought tears to one's eyes. The prison governor had just been to see her, she told me, to find out if she had everything she wanted. Shortly afterwards a frugal but not unpalatable meal of steamed sole and melon had been brought her. She described prison life as "simple, but everything of the very best."

M. D.

Going to Town

AFTER a year in the sandy wastes our Detachment is now within a few miles of a town. Lieutenant Simpson and I are having our fill of the night life of the place, which consists mainly of teetotal dances at the Y.W.C.A. and egg-and-tomato sandwiches.

"It gives one a feeling of luxury, having transport of one's own," said Simpson, "after having had to cadge from the R.A.S.C. for a year. When it is my turn to sit in front with the driver I sit back and close my eyes and imagine that our vehicle is a staff car, or at least one of those little green P.U.s."

Actually it is an extremely antique water-truck. One of us rides in front with the driver and the other sits on the tank at the back. A nervous official of some sort has written "Speed not to exceed 35 m.p.h.," which does not alarm us very much as her top speed (down hill, with a favourable wind) is about 18 m.p.h.

Our Kugombas have to walk to the town, because in this part of the Middle East it is an offence to give an East African a lift. Even so, they manage to get into town, either by walking or else by becoming so pale with fatigue that they look like white men and thus qualify for lifts.

There is something rather heartening about an East African going to town. Beautifully ironed and pressed as to clothes (for he does his own laundry), his face glistening and his eyes gleaming with anticipation, he presents himself at the office and asks for a pass, and listens with polite attention to the long string of instructions about not going out of bounds, not drinking lemonade unless purchased at the

Naafi, etc. He is also told not to waste his money on luxuries, at which a faintly sarcastic smile crosses his face, his pay being a shilling a day, out of which, if he thinks it necessary, he must clothe his wife or wives, keep the home going, and educate his children.

Probably he has only one piastre (twopence-halfpenny) to spend in town, but you would not guess this from the lordly way he enters the shops and examines the goods displayed for him by the Egyptian shopkeepers. In the old days when Egypt was thronged with white men the shopkeepers rather discouraged African custom, but now they welcome it with open arms. They know that the East African is not going to buy anything, and the East African knows that they know, but the Egyptian enjoys practising salesmanship and the East African enjoys beating the Egyptian down. It is art for art's sake. The Egyptian of course knows no Swahili, and the East African knows very little Arabic. The transaction is carried out (or not carried out) by signs and gesticulations, interlarded by a very small amount of extremely basic English. Passing Poles, Free Italians and Basutos occasionally lend a hand.

The morning thus wears pleasantly away, and the East Africans then adjourn to the Church of England African Canteen, where they lunch on a cup of tea (one piastre). Wealthy men with no family ties may spend a day's pay on a lunch, but the African stomach is ostrich-like, and even a wealthy man usually prefers to husband his resources for the final treat of the day, a visit to the cinema. Here he sits wide-eyed, and very vague as to what is happening on the screen. He cannot understand a word that is said by the players, but returns to camp highly satisfied with his day's outing. He then sits down and writes a long letter home to his brother to advise him to become a soldier of King George, telling him that a great time is had by all.

Outrunning the Constable

"It would appear that military events on the Continent have outstripped in pace the readjustment of police on the home industrial front."—*Sunday paper*.

Collaboration

"Evacuees wouldn't listen to warnings and came back to London, then to prove Mr. Morrison right the Germans sent over more flying bombs."—*Schoolgirl's essay*.



"Wouldn't it be marvellous if the war ended on Guy Fawkes night?"

Little Talks

O H, so you don't like my being "political"—that's it?

Well, of course, old boy, I mean in a place like this, just having a drink, and a friendly chat, surely one can keep off politics?

All right. Let's keep off 'em. Go ahead.

What d'you mean?

What I say. Talk. You talk. And keep off politics.

All right. It's been a lovely day.

Yes!

Dark, though, isn't it—after yesterday?

Yes.

I must say, I miss that hour.

What hour?

Double Summer Time, of course. I don't see why they couldn't keep it on another month.

Here, I say, you can't say that!

Why not?

Politics.

Nonsense.

But, of course! Summer Time was instituted by Act of Parliament after a great public agitation. Double Summer Time was imposed by a Minister of the Crown, I think, by Order in Council. That by itself raises important constitutional thingummies. You've got an Act of Parliament altered by the Crown, an Act that affects the intimate lives of everyone. Apart from that it affects the whole conduct of agriculture—a point of acute controversy—the management of factories, and—

Yes, but that's not what I call politics.

Politics is the whole art, science, practice and what-not of the government of man. Everything Parliament

does is politics. Everything the Government does is politics, because I can put down a Question about it. Almost everything you do is politics these days, because there's hardly anything you can do without the leave of the Government. However, what shall we talk about?

The weather. My glass is rising.

It's going to be fine.

Are you referring to the Straits of Dover?

No.

Then you have put at least one political foot in it. Except in the Straits of Dover the weather is on the Secret List, and predictions about it ought not to be made in a public place. Anyone in this bar may be a secret agent. He may have no barometer—almost certainly he has not, because people who carry barometers about in war-time are bound to excite suspicion. All right. He looks at the murky sky and can't make out what the weather is going to do. But when he hears your intelligent forecast, founded on scientific observations, off he goes to his secret radio. You can't be too careful.

Nonsense.

Not at all. And, anyhow, it's politics, because I can put down a Question whether and why it is still considered necessary to conceal from the people the state of their own weather. I may be told that it is not in the public interest to disclose or I may get an urgent private request not to persist in my embarrassing inquiry—but it will still be politics.

Well, have a drink, old boy.

I'd like to, old chap. But half a minute. If you think you're avoiding politics, you're sadly mistaken. For one thing you've flung into the arena the prickly question of treating in war-time, which has once or twice been hotly discussed in the House of Commons. Probably we are surrounded by Mass Observers who will put us into a book, and we shall contribute to the statistics employed in some future debate on treating. And in general—

You won't let that deter you, surely?

Probably not. But, as I was saying, the general theme you have unfortunately brought up could hardly be more political. It is governed not by one but by dozens of Acts of Parliament. Look at the walls—on every one a bit of an Act of Parliament. You mustn't "pass slips"; you mustn't bring in young persons; you mustn't gamble or play the piano; you mustn't play billiards on Sundays; you mustn't consume after 10 P.M.; and there's an enormous piece of prose from the Innkeeper's Liability Act. The landlord, there, looks cheery enough, but he may expose himself to a dozen prosecutions every minute of the day. He's not even sure that this time next year he'll still be the landlord here: that's another Act of Parliament. Now these Acts are not immutable laws of nature. They can be altered by other Acts of Parliament: and, as you know, there's a very strong body of opinion that some of them ought to be altered—

Now, there you go! Airing your old—

Not at all. I'm expressing no opinion myself. I was simply recording a fact, to show how dangerous is the topic you have thrust to the front by your well-meant proposal. Now in France it would be quite different. In France, where the Licensing Laws are much less—

Now, now!

Don't be so nervous. I was going to say that they are less numerous and noticeable. And, though there are a few mild little laws, there is no strong body of opinion, so far as I know, that wants them altered.

I think this is a little near the—

No, no, this is purely speculative. I often wonder what would have happened if Winston's proposal for a Union between France and us had been accepted.

How d'you mean?

I mean, would France have had our Licensing Laws—or should we have had theirs?

I don't see why either.

But surely, if two countries become one, they must have the same set of

laws? And, by the way, there can be no frontier between them. So there would have been no taxes on French wines.

Jolly good show.

I couldn't disagree with you less. If we really mean what we say about clasping France to our bosom again—and I hope we do—it's really about time we stopped taxing her finest products as if they were perilous poisons—Don't you agree?

I'm sorry, old boy, but I'm afraid this is much too political.

Oh? Couldn't it count as financial?

It would mean an Act of Parliament, wouldn't it?

I'm afraid you're right. I'm sorry. I withdraw. What shall we talk about?

My boy's getting married. A jolly girl.

Do you think Love is a safe topic?

Oh, surely.

Have you drawn the attention of the young couple to Section One of the Matrimonial Causes Act, 1938?

Goodness, no. What's that?

No hasty divorce. They must wait at least three years.

Well, I call that good.

Maybe. But it's politics. Or was. You see, it really is rather difficult.

I begin to agree. Perhaps you'd better have that drink.

Aye, aye, sir. And perhaps in silence.

A. P. H.

Memo to Architect

DEAR MR. DOAM,—Comments on your scheme have poured into Mr. Tingle's office like hailstones only bigger, and he wishes to give you the gust of them. It seems that a concentration of all our borough offices inside a traffic roundabout would be taking coals to Newcastle via Brighton because we have enough circumlocution as it is. This comes from the grammar school.

Then there is the viaduct proposal, to eliminate the traffic congestion in Bog Hollow. Here you have put your foot in hollowed ground, because all our vested interests are sunk in this area, and our residents want it preserving as it is for the sake of auld lang sign and for sentiment because their forefathers built Plonkton around the bog where travellers in the old coach days used to get stuck and need assistance and refreshment at any price. Our leading industry is still used-car salvage, and it is run a close second by catering and putting-up; it is said for miles that the only thing they never put up in Plonkford is the shutters and the only thing they never

put down is the price. So you will see we have to pass up the viaduct or the world will pass over us and disregard our Bog and all its historical associates.

As to what our inhabitants think about your proposed road through our existing market, their minds on this matter are similar to the bog, as the chief attraction of the present arrangement is that crowds once in the market cannot get out in a hurry except through the Highwayman Inn which did not get its name through administering free refreshment to the needless. The back entrance of the Highwayman coming in the market is appreciated most by our male population, but one of them goes as far as to

say that without it his poor wife too would have nothing to rail against in the chapel.

So you will see that altogether our own re-planning scheme is best as it puts the citizen in front of the flying motorist, but if air transport comes in both your scheme and ours will gang ugly.

J. TINGLE,
Unplanning Comm.

Parliamentary News

"The commons tell the time of year quite plainly. The heather is rusting over, too..."—*Daily Mail*.



"... in der ole kitbag
Und schmeil, schmeil, schmeil..."

At the Play

"RICHARD THE THIRD" (NEW)

THERE has been an attempt in some quarters to whitewash Richard the Third, to call him a good king and a man gravely misjudged. Non-specialists remain incredulous. It will take much argument, we feel, to convince them that Richard, in spite of his intellect, was anything at heart but a tough Sir Guy, a babes-in-the-wood murderer, a mediæval Nazi about whom too many people lost their heads. Shakespeare's chronicle is the Gloucester faction's woe. Here is a Richard brilliantly evil, a villain self-accused, one rais'd in blood and one in blood establish'd. At various times in this glorious Saturday-night melodrama his enemies describe him as a boar—an easy choice when we remember that two boars "rampant argent" supported his shield—as a caedemon, a dog, a rooting hog, a bottled spider, a bunch-back'd toad, a hedgehog, a tiger, and a cockatrice.

Now, to join this fair assembly, Mr. LAURENCE OLIVIER presents him as a limping panther. The actor rejects the idea of a Richard set wholly in the "ceremonious and traditional" mould as a fee-fi-fo-fum ogre, a child of Giant Despair. His newer reading, so warmly cheered, loses nothing of the familiar excitement. Here are the theatrical flourishes, the relish, the entry "in pomp, crowned," the spurning of *Buckingham*, the fury—like Horatius "a wild cat mad with wounds"—on the lost field of Bosworth. Mr. OLIVIER grants us these effects. He catches the king red-handed, but he also manages to impress us, as many *Richards* in the past have failed to do, with the usurper's dominant brain. This is a subtle *Richard*, swift in thought and action. His ambition (if we may add to the party) mounts on eagle's wings. He can make persuasive the wooing of Miss JOYCE REDMAN's *Lady Anne*. He masters the realm by power of intellect and an unholy magnetism as well as by physical violence. No one in recent years has fixed the complete

character so surely: the actor is at once knave, king, and ace.

In the past Mr. OLIVIER has given us much to remember—notably his speaking of *Hamlet's* "How all occasions," the farewell of *Coriolanus* to Rome and the coming to Antium, and *Henry the Fifth's* night thoughts from abroad. Now to these memories we can add *Richard's* coldly glittering overture, the sudden assumption of majesty at the phrase "Farewell, good cousin," which ends the

come like shadows and like shadows fade. Elsewhere Mr. BURRELL has wisely cut most of the invective, the ravens' revel. *Margaret* is confined to her earliest frolic, and Dame SYBIL THORNDIKE pours the acid so generously that we are sorry to miss a second draught. Miss REDMAN animates her *Snow Queen*, and Mr. NICHOLAS HANNEN, playing *Buckingham* against his temperament, glows into life when the kingmaker realizes his doom. (Again Mr. HANNEN's

make-up is a small triumph.) *Richmond* is honoured by Mr. RALPH RICHARDSON, who has every excuse for letting the part stream like a banner; this is a Saint George triumphing over the dragon. Incidentally the first-night programme told us, to our mild surprise, that Richmond became "King Edward the Seventh." Mr. GEORGE RELPH makes no fuss about *Clarence's* aria, and later he has a good minute or two as a single-speech Archbishop.

Like all the histories, the play bristles with small parts. Not all are well done in this production: we expect more from *Catesby*, who is *Gloucester's* faithful follower to the last ("Withdraw, my lord; I'll help you to a horse"), and from *Tyrrell*, with whom this *Richard* so forcibly rehearses the murder of the Princes. On the other hand, Mr. HARCOURT WILLIAMS gives his burning-glass intensity to *Edward the Fourth's* single scene and final collapse, though here it will be long before we can forget the

late Ion Swinley's silver-point at the Old Vic. Mr. MICHAEL WARRE fights gallantly as the loser in the second battle of Hastings—his severed head is not so prominent or so incarnadined as usual—and, unexpectedly, the cast includes the name of "Jane Shore, mistress to the King," decorative but dumb.

Finally, nothing at the New Theatre causes us to echo Hazlitt's loathing of the "fantoccini exhibition of the young Princes Edward and York bandying childish wit with their uncle." The scene, often alarming for both the audience and the children's fellow-players, is now a quiet success.

J. C. T.

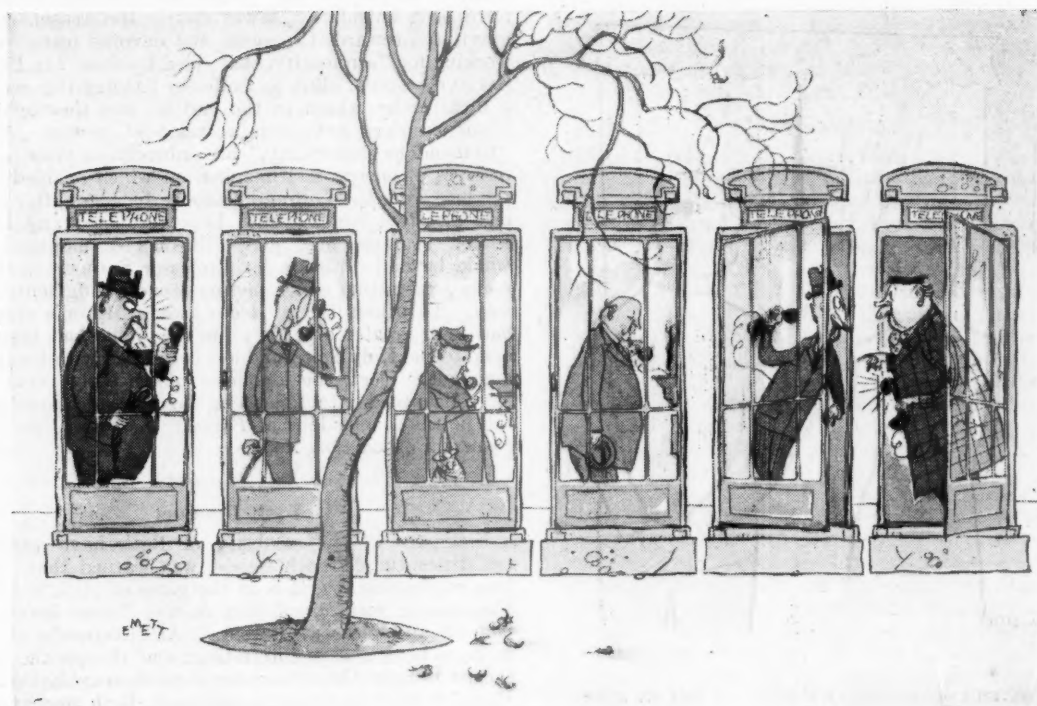


FOREGONE PERSUASION

Duke of Buckingham MR. NICHOLAS HANNEN
Richard, Duke of Gloucester . . . MR. LAURENCE OLIVIER

king-making charade at Baynard's Castle, the thunder-and-lightning on the throne, the bravado and growing fear in the messengers' scene, and, not least, the anguish of the close.

Mr. JOHN BURRELL's Old Vic. production leaves us too often in the twilight. Otherwise, it is a worthy frame for such a *Richard* as this. The grouping is unobtrusively right: Mr. BURRELL achieves tension in the impeachment of that other Hastings—how well-judged are the silences here!—and succeeds also in marshalling the phantoms of the night before Bosworth, a desperately difficult business. For once we cannot mistake the line for a dispirited queue: the ghosts



"I said—gentleman at the end seems to be talking to ME . . . pass it on."

The New London

LONDON, bruised and battered city,
Heart of Empire, England's crown,
Dear, though some have called you gritty,
To the sons that name you Town,
Men e'en now are planning deeply.
How to raise you up anew
Nobly, and by no means cheaply,
As is rightly just and due.

Yes, our brainiest are mapping
Out a fine imagined scheme,
Keen to scrap what calls for scrapping,
Shape you to a poet's dream.
Smoke will vanish altogether,
Smuts and soot will be unknown,
This alone will give your weather
Quite a sparkle of its own.

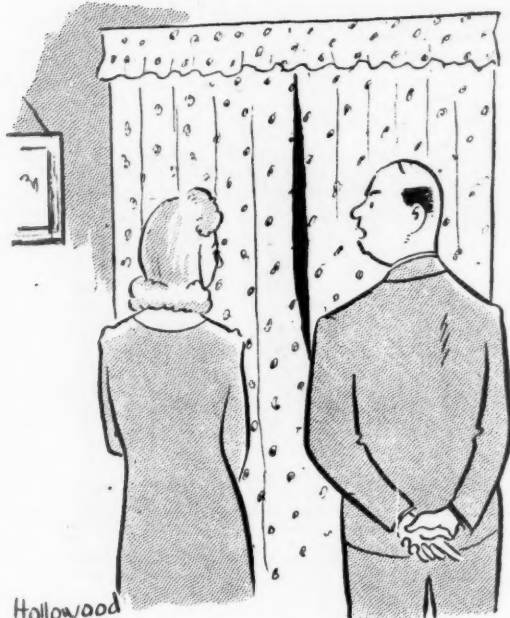
Trees will bloom in open spaces,
Rubbled acres turn to parks;
There the brats with rosy faces
May indulge their childish larks;

Where the coster once would bellow
Forth his unmelodious truck
You may coax the sad though mellow
Plaint of Procne, given luck.

Slums will undergo translation
Into something trim and neat—
Cots of pleasing elevation
With new gadgets, all complete;
Fridge and cooker, phone and chromium,
H. and c. throughout, should rouse
Heartfelt thanks and warm encomium
In the dweller's easy spouse.

Yet I see the homing Cockney
Take his once familiar range,
On his ear the cry of Procne,
In his eye a land of change,
Feeling just some trifle choky
As he mourns the ancient spell
Of Old London, grim and smoky,
And the hoarse-flung coster's yell.

DUM-DUM.



"No, THIS one cost thirty shillings—it was the chink in the bathroom that cost us five pounds."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Milton

THIS edition of Professor DENIS SAURAT's *Milton: Man and Thinker* (DENT, 15/-) contains a section of great interest on Robert Fludd and the Mortalists, contemporary thinkers by whom Milton was influenced in his later thought, and especially in his disbelief in the soul of the individual and therefore in personal survival. With this section Professor SAURAT completes the most searching and the most stimulating study of Milton's ideas that has yet appeared. As a Frenchman he has not had to free himself from any early impression of Milton as a sternly orthodox Christian unaccountably saddled with poetic genius. To Professor SAURAT Milton is "an intellectual who was fighting for liberty of thought," an intensely self-centred genius grimly bent "on getting out of his great gifts all they can produce," an individualist who hated all institutions and worked out his own cosmogony without regard to Christian dogmas. God, for Milton, is the whole of being, a pantheistic conception, and Christ is "Intelligence coming down into man to dominate the passions, by incarnation into a group of men who are the elect." It follows that the Holy Spirit is, as Professor SAURAT puts it, "somewhat of a supernumerary in Milton's system." A spirit moving through all men would disturb the elect at their task of instructing mankind how to live. As he believed in the elect, it was inevitable that Milton, conscious of his extraordinary gifts, should number himself among

them. The effect on his character and genius of this sense of election is not judged by Professor SAURAT to have been harmful. It was clearly the reason why he gravitated towards Cromwell, and devoted many years to working for "a minority, that ruled by force," in Professor SAURAT's words. But to Professor SAURAT this service of a dictator by whom in the end he was thoroughly disillusioned does not seem a waste of powers. Milton's "tremendous personality," his unbreakable pride, and the reserves of energy and imagination which enabled him to produce *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes* after labours and disasters which would have deadened any kind of feeling in most men place Milton's development as a whole beyond criticism for Professor SAURAT, in spite of many penetrating and sometimes severe judgments by the way. To others it may seem that if Milton's sympathy had been greater and his pride less, if he had been more open to the Holy Spirit and less concerned with his position among the elect, the loveliness of his early verse would have deepened into something far more quickening than the petrified splendour of *Paradise Lost* and the desolate grandeur of *Samson Agonistes*.

H. K.

Bath Bouquet

Estimates of the salubrity of Bath have varied. A twelfth-century French tourist was warned that "buried in a sulphurous fog, it is at the gates of Hell." A Tudor Englishman maintained that it was "sette booth yn a fruteful and pleasant Botom." Architecturally it seems to have been always interesting; and though the Saxons sacked Roman Akemanceaster more thoroughly than their Hunnish successors did its successor, Bath rose again, on the wool trade and—thanks to a French physician—the waters, and produced the Wife of Bath in time for the Canterbury Pilgrimage. All this, and much more as characteristic and entertaining, has been cleverly culled and tied into a Bath posy by the late Lieutenant R. A. LONDON SMITH, R.N.V.R., who, dying last year, aged twenty-eight, discovered Bath on a pre-war walking-tour from Glastonbury to Chester. It is characteristic of the generous connoisseurship of this born mediævalist that he whole-heartedly appreciated the lovely terraced city that stood for Vitruvius and Palladio. Her society, whether of *haut ton* or riff-raff, he enjoys as a genial onlooker wearing a cap of invisibility for the better observance of human crotchets. His illustrations live up to the renown of a famous series; and *Bath* (BATSFORD, 12/6) is a book to acquire and, if possible, to keep.

H. P. E.

Leningrad Besieged

Anyone might suppose, to judge from many books on Soviet Russia, that it sprang full-grown into existence, a state where never state had been before. *Leningrad* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 10/6) leaves no room for this error. Mr. ALEXANDER WERTH spent his boyhood in St. Petersburg, and though he was not to revisit it until the raising of the German siege, for him, naturally, the city has a continuous entity. Since, for some reason, it is always easier to believe in the future of a place if one knows it to have a past, Mr. WERTH's combination of wise reporting with a real but disciplined nostalgia makes Leningrad a very vivid city. Obviously it is a city with character, with foibles, with eccentricities even, as well as courage: the sort of city that, like London, inspires a fervent local patriotism. The workers in its factories endured unbelievable hardships—often in that bitter winter of starvation they dragged

themselves there for the consolation even of dying in a place so well-loved and fought for and worked for—and, so strong was the feeling for the city and all that pertains to it, men in the front lines, never very far from the city, saved from their own meagre rations in order to supplement those of the citizens. Things, we know from dispatches at the time, were very bad there, but from Mr. WERTH we learn how good things were too in small deeds of courage, self-sacrifice and laughter. Theatres were icy, so the dancers, blue with cold, danced in fur coats over their costumes. Men on leave from the front came to visit a hero's statue. People felt keenly, as a personal loss, any damage to the architectural beauties of the place. This was certainly no shallow new city, but an old one in the prime of life, and never fuller of vitality than in the worst days when every form of artistic and intellectual relaxation was willingly subordinated to the common task of saving Leningrad.

J. S.

American Period-Piece

Mrs. JANET WHITNEY, chiefly known over here for her life of Elizabeth Fry, has indicated a portentous Quaker background to her brisk and accomplished eighteenth-century novel. "Indicated" is the word, for though most of the book's principal characters are Friends, their flavour is far more secular than religious; and in so far as religion stands for spirit against formality only one of them is religious at all. *Stephen*, the adopted uncle of the heroine's favoured suitor *Dr. Andrew Deverell*, is a sensitively indicated mystic. *Priscilla*, her jealous cousin, is sub-human to the point of melodrama—an Uncle Silas piece. Between these extremes of good and evil *Andrew* and his *Judith* (HARRAP, 10/6) play out their Montagu-Capulet romance with an embittered family lawsuit and the Damoclean disapproval of "Meeting" suspended over their gallant young heads in the Philadelphia of 1792. This is President Washington's capital and provides not only an amusing panorama of candle-lit society but a grim visitation of yellow fever which solves many of the book's problems with legitimate high-handedness. A certain conventionality in *Andrew* and *Judith* is to blame, one feels, for the fact that the dramatic skill of the story defeats—as it continually tends to do—its human implications.

H. P. E.

U.S.S.R.

This account by Mr. WALTER DURANTY of Russia during the last twenty-six years (*U.S.S.R.* HAMISH HAMILTON, 15/-) is dedicated to "Melchior, who once took a mote from mine eye." Those who do not share Mr. DURANTY's religious adoration of Lenin ("Of the men who have lived on earth, Lenin was one of the greatest") may regret that Melchior, while he was about it, did not take the beam out of Mr. DURANTY's eye as well as the mote. Lenin was an extremely able revolutionary, whose practice no more harmonized with Marx's theories than Robespierre's with Rousseau's. Mr. DURANTY sees this when he calls the Russian revolution "a revolt more national than Marxist, similar, in fact, to the French Revolution of 1789," but allows his emotion to cloud his reason when he speaks of Lenin moulding his country in a new way along untrodden paths. An excellent reporter, with a long and intimate knowledge of Russia, Mr. DURANTY makes it increasingly clear as his narrative proceeds that Russia has not followed a new way to what, when he is praising Stalin, he contemptuously calls "a 'Left' Heaven upon earth," but has, in the time-honoured manner, transformed revolutionary passion into patriotic fervour. Mr. DURANTY has much of interest to say about the electrification of Russia, the Five-Year-Plan, the

Treason trials and all that happened between Munich and June 22nd, 1941; but his account of the duel between Trotsky and Stalin (who "sat outside the door of Lenin's office like a faithful watchdog") does not make that dramatic episode very actual.

H. K.

Odds Against

Wings Over Burma (QUALITY PRESS, 15/-) deserves to be one of the best remembered of the many excellent books written by R.A.F. officers during this war, for the author, KENNETH HEMINGWAY, is a trained writer as well as a fighter pilot. He knows how to describe feelings as well as facts; he gives details of small happenings and conversations and also a broad view of the terrible events in Burma when, as the C.O. of the isolated squadron said, "We hadn't got a clue, the Japs might have been in Calcutta for all we knew," and all the time, "Blithe as a band of robbers, wary as a bunch of monkeys, the boys carried on—dawn readiness, an escort, perhaps a scramble, then a scrap lunch from available tins, another escort or strafe, then back to the mess to get enough sleep to carry us on till dawn again." It is all told with a cheerfulness that breaks into anger more readily than into gloom. There is the description of one short luxurious leave in Mandalay where strawberries and cream took the place of things from tins. This is followed by a chapter, fitly headed "Shambles," which tells of the arrival of "bunches of weaving Jap fighters protecting formation after formation of bombers," the fights that followed, the author's feelings while stumbling towards the aerodrome after a forced landing—"One day . . . one day . . . there'll be fifty of us, not just five . . . just you wait." And his longing to be "Just once, that's all, just once, in a position where we had at least equal numbers." A melancholy account of the dispersal of the Squadron follows. The book ends on a defiant note after the account of one more battle. May he give us this book's triumphant sequel one day soon.

B. E. B.





"Ho yes, o' course—you WOULD serve little short-sleeves first."

High Level

III

"WHAT you have to remember," said D., turning the pages of the heavy Visitors' Book reminiscently, "is that you are a buffer."

"Oh, yes?" I said.

"Between him and the outside world, I mean." He read out a few dazzlingly eminent names, more to himself than to me. "You get rid of the people he doesn't want to see, and you arrange for people who don't want to see him to—er—see him. Clear on that?"

"Oh, yes."

I had a glimpse of myself pitching a flock of admirals down the broad staircase, while a sprinkling of hypnotized plenipotentiaries waited outside my communicating door.

"And of course," said D., who had possibly read my thoughts, "you'll have to entertain people who are waiting to see him. They wait for

ages sometimes. Can't just let them stand about brooding."

"Rather not," I said.

"How are you on entertaining distinguished strangers?"

"All right, I think, thanks."

But I was having another vision. I saw myself taking from the deep drawer in my desk an assortment of simple but amusing puzzles, handing the twisted-nails puzzle with easy grace to the Prime Minister, the ball-bearings-under-glass puzzle to Lord Catto and the make-the-square-into-a-triangle-by-adding-one-line puzzle to the Indian prince whose name I had been unable to catch. That would leave the plasticine and the small box of water-colours as spares.

"Worried about something?" asked D., not having read my thoughts this time.

"Well, no," I said, "except that I feel I may be a little out of my depth

in disposing of the unwanted guests. I feel it may be a little difficult for me. Supposing, for example, that"—I aimed high and at random—"Lord Horncastle called to see him, and he was already in conference with"—I plunged wildly again—"the Home Secretary . . . well, I mean, how do I get rid of Lord Horncastle, for instance?"

"Perfectly simple," said D., "though calling for a little discretion of course. Let me see now"—he flipped over a couple of scrawled pages—"last time old Horncastle called, in July, there was a V.I.P. in there." He nodded towards the great door.

"A V.I.P.?"

"A very important person, you know. I rather think it was his wife . . . not Horncastle's wife of course—"

"Of course."

"So, naturally, Horncastle had to be got rid of."

"I see. So you just told him to go?"

"Good heavens, no! You must use a little tact, you know. What I did, if I remember, was to pretend that I was announcing him. I popped quietly into the room, made my excuses, searched in his 'IN' tray for some imaginary file, came out again and explained that he was dictating an immediate dispatch for the personal information of the Viceroy of India, was having all his meals brought in and didn't expect to be finished before about eight or nine o'clock."

"I see," I said. "Jolly good." I was making a mental note of this effective stratagem, but D., with a return of clairvoyance, caught me at it.

"For mercy's sake," he said with a flutter of mild panic, "don't go using that dodge again. Think up something fresh and useful each time. The best thing is to sketch out a few plausible tales and keep the list by you, crossing them off as you use them. I mean, if some cabinet minister or somebody calls three times running and finds each time that he's on the transatlantic wire to Cordell Hull, he may smell a rat—you never know."

"Quite so," I said.

"As a matter of fact," said D., "I believe I have my old list somewhere; there are probably one or two ideas on it I haven't used, and in any case you can add to them when you get the inspiration. I'll send it in to you."

"Thanks very much. Oh, there's just one thing, I suppose there's no guiding rule that will tell me what sort of people he wants to see and what sort he doesn't? It's a little difficult in these early days for me to judge."

D. reflected for a moment, and then shook his head. "Well, no," he said, "there isn't, really. Of course in time you'll be able to smell a V.I.P. a mile off, but I'm afraid there'll be nothing in their appearance to *show* you." He paused, trying to think of something helpful. "They're either covered in gold braid—though they're not necessarily V.I.P.s because of that—or they wear very old clothes with food-stains. They almost always carry little bags or cases or something, and they usually don't think they ought to be bothered for their names, because, naturally, half the fun of being a V.I.P. is in imagining that everybody knows who you are."

"Naturally."

"Well," said D., "I really must get on. I'll send you that list round."

"Thanks very much," I said.

"Not a bit," said D. He smiled a smile of brisk encouragement and disappeared.

The foolscap page of white lies turned up an hour later with the mid-morning mail. I studied it with interest, but was sorry to see that most of the best stories seemed to have been crossed off already. I would have liked to use the one about the luncheon with the Chester Herald, for instance, or the one noted succinctly as "Gone to Iceland," but they had red pencil strokes through them, as had "Conference, House of Lords" and "Ptomaine poisoning." Those that were left were really rather commonplace, I thought—"Dentist," "Balloon Factory," "House blitzed," "Haircut." I was rather disappointed in D.

"Is he in?" said a voice from my door, and I sprang up respectfully. It was a small man, but with a noble face. His clothes were not new, though I had no time to check them for food-stains. He carried a small brown bag.

"Well, no, sir," I said hurriedly, trying to be as charming a buffer as possible, "he's out at the moment."

He frowned.

"Out?" he said—"but I don't understand."

No, well, I thought, perhaps he'd better not be out.

"Well, sir," I said, "as a matter of fact he isn't out, he's in."

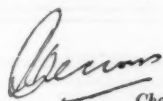
*The Secretary,
Punch Comforts Fund,
10 Bouverie Street,
London, E.C.4.*

MY DEAR SIRs,—Your most generous parcels of woollies have come safely to hand and I should just like to take this opportunity of expressing my sincere thanks.

I shall be grateful if you will pass on to all your readers who contribute to your comforts fund my sincere appreciation, for it is only through the unseen, and all too often unacknowledged, work of such people that we are enabled to issue to our seafaring lads those extra garments which they need so much and appreciate so warmly.

With all good wishes and very many thanks for your generosity to us at all times.

I am, Yours sincerely,



Chaplain

Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940

"Ah, good," said the visitor. "In that case—"

"But he's very much engaged at the moment, I'm afraid, sir."

I had interposed myself swiftly between him and the great door. Fantastic images flashed across my mind. Who was he engaged with? General Montgomery? The Pope? Bing Crosby? Now that I had said he was in, "House blitzed" or "Balloon Factory" scarcely seemed to apply.

"I'm afraid, sir," I said, gulping, "that he's having his hair cut."

"He's *what*?" said the man. He took a pace back.

"Actually," I said, improvising rapidly, "he's extraordinarily busy, drafting a report for Mr. Roosevelt, so he has a man come in to cut his hair in the office to avoid delay in the work. If you could come back this afternoon . . ."

The man had turned pale. I fancied he might faint. It was a considerable relief to me to hear D.'s footsteps approaching along the corridor and to hear his voice, incisive and competent, while he was yet ten yards distant.

"Go right in, Charlie," he said—"it's all right."

The man thanked him, brushed past me with a venomous look and passed through the great mahogany door.

"Hello," said D., "everything under control?"

"Well—" I said.

"Charlie comes every Monday from across the road," he said. "Cuts his hair. Ought to have told you, but there are so many things. Will you give him two bob when he comes out, and charge it down on the personal expenses sheet?"

"Right," I said.

"Did you get the list?"

"Yes, thanks."

"Good. Hope you'll find it useful."

"Rather," I said.

It was going to be uncomfortable, though. I should have very much liked to go to Iceland, or at the very least a conference at the House of Lords.

J. B. B.

Sinecure

"Window Display Manager, for large multiple firm having no goods to sell."—*Advt. in daily paper.*

This Week's Arithmetic

"Equally germane to the intricate problem of Paris fashions is the question of costs. A very ordinary frock costs £40, and the monthly wage of a shorthand typist is about £10 a week. So that to buy herself a frock a typist must sacrifice four months' salary."—*Sunday paper.*

Eat Dangerously

I FIND it surprisingly difficult to interest people in food. I try all kinds of people—editors of women's papers and intelligent strangers I meet in queues, as well as my own narrow circle. The average person is quite ready to talk on the subject. Journalistically speaking, the subject of food is topical and has a wide appeal. But it is approached by the average person from only one angle: food we cannot get.

Spread before the average person the riches of Nature's larder—roots, berries, seaweed, snails, fungi—and you only encounter apathy. Yet anyone who gave the matter a little thought ought to see that what may be a vegetable to us now was only a root to somebody once. Potatoes to us were tubers to Sir Walter Raleigh, and where should we be if he had never tried them? This is not just a rhetorical question. In the Dublin Zoo, monkeys have been fed on a war-time diet of potatoes, and their birth-rate has gone up from one in thirty years to six since 1939, so who knows how much influence potatoes may have had on populations? But apart from such incidental advantages, surely anything new to eat is worth investigating, in case you might some day be somewhere where there was nothing else to eat but that, and if you did not know about it you would starve in the sight of plenty.

I knew a man once who was an expert on fungi. He would go about the countryside finding what he called boletus and the true country-dwellers called toadstools. Everybody said

something would happen to him, but what did happen was different from what they expected. One day he went out in a boat and was wrecked and cast ashore at the bottom of a cliff and stayed there for twelve hours without food. But he was not really without food, because it was the kind of cliff where one gathered samphire, only he did not know about samphire as he did about fungi, so what might have been a fruitful experience was wasted on him.

Nature, like the Ministry of Food, goes in for zoning, but there is something to eat almost anywhere if you know what. There are truffles in beech woods, easy to find with the help of a truffle hound, and there are edible snails in the remains of Roman settlements, and also in Soho.

If you want a really nutritious meal, wait till August and dig up the roots of the purple orchis, *O. mascula*. Baked, ground to flour, and prepared like gruel, these are enormously popular in Albania. The Albanian for them is Saleep. They are cheap, sustaining, easy to cook, non-habit-forming, and practically odourless.

But do not expect, as a wild-food eater, to meet with encouragement. You gather nettles and nobody will cook them; you copy out recipes for cockle chowder, and people pretend they cannot open the cockles; you reserve a particularly fine dandelion for salad, and somebody else comes along and spikes it with weed-killer. All these things have happened to me. And I have never yet tapped the

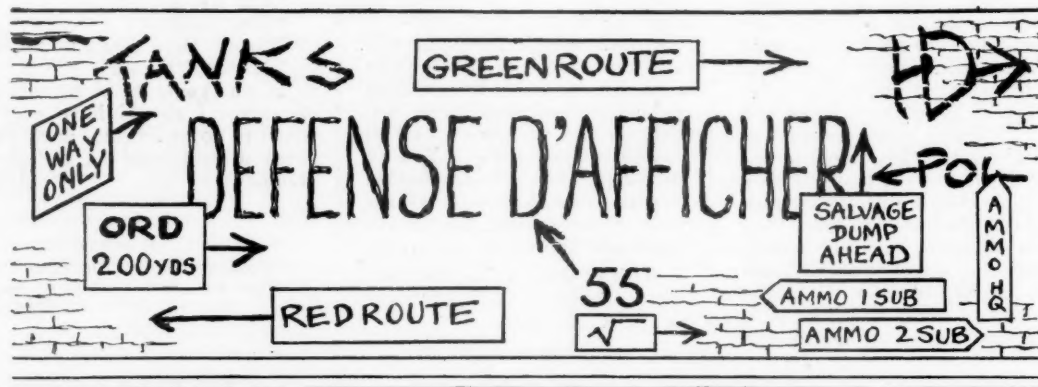
trunks of birch trees in March for the rising sap, nor cooked young hop tops in bundles like asparagus, nor baked passion dock pie.

But over the tea-cups, when others have been boasting of how they climbed up crags, or sat in tree-tops to photograph herons on the nest, I can tell how I have eaten a great big brown spotted mushroom. The point about all wholesome country sports is that they combine practical purpose with an element of danger. Some people imagine it is useful to practise chimneying up fissures in mountains in case one day they had to. Other people think that films of herons disgorging eels for their young, which is what herons do, are of educational value. In the same way, as I have explained already, I think it is useful to know about food, and that risks are not run in vain.

If I should fall a victim to some experiment, people will say of me, throwing out the remains of my last *hors d'œuvre*, that I always was interested in food. It will make a nice epitaph.

From One in Bed with Lumbago

Oh, welcome friend, with books and flow'rs arriving,
And smiles of sympathy about you shed,
Approach with care, I pray, without contriving
To kick my slippers underneath the bed.



NOTICE.—Contributions or Communications requiring an answer should be accompanied by a stamped and addressed Envelope or Wrapper. The entire copyright in all Articles, Sketches, Drawings, etc., published in PUNCH is specifically reserved to the Proprietors throughout the countries signatory to the BERNE CONVENTION, the U.S.A., and the Argentine. Reproductions or imitations of any of these are therefore expressly forbidden. The Proprietors will, however, always consider any request from authors of literary contributions for permission to reprint.

CONDITIONS OF SALE AND SUPPLY.—This periodical is sold subject to the following conditions, namely, that it shall not, without the written consent of the publishers first given, be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of Trade except at the full retail price of 6d.; and that it shall not be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of in a mutilated condition or in any unauthorized cover by way of Trade: or affixed to or as part of any publication or advertising, literary or pictorial matter whatsoever.



M. Gaston Bonvivant, lately of Paris (France) confesses himself a total convert to the excellence of our English cuisine. Particularly is his heart rejoiced by "*le merveilleux lapin des Galles*" (welsh rarebit to us). This, and a garnishment of what he calls *Pon Yon*, almost reconciles him to the loss of *Cêpes à la Bordelaise*.

Pan Yan

Now even Pan Yan is in rather short supply, but Gaston declares that *un petit pain vaut mieux que rien*.

MACONOCHE BROS. LIMITED • LONDON



ONE SOLDIER-MAN'S
POST-WAR PLANS...

Dear Ma
The war goes well and with luck I hope to come back soon to you for good and all. Speaking selfishly, I do long for the comforts of civilization and look forward to those things that you and I have missed to... our machintoshed rambles in the rain... the first crocuses at the end of the lawn... my books.

Ah, and speaking of books, I always carry a mental picture of my "easy corner" for reading... my leather chair, my slippers—and my TERRY ANGLEPOISE LAMP. That lamp was made for bookworms like me, and when you get me in that corner with that combination—chair, slippers, book and ANGLEPOISE—you'll never get me out of it again.

Yours Bill

include
the

**TERRY
ANGLEPOISE LAMP**

(Unobtainable until Victory)

Pat. all
countries

Sole Makers: HERBERT
TERRY & SONS LTD.
REDDITCH.

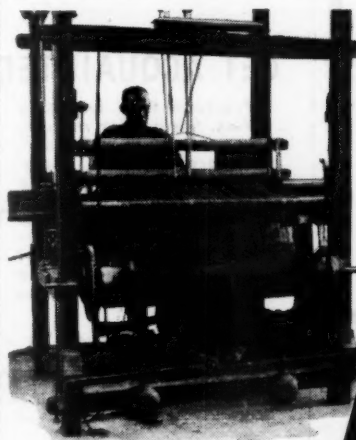


Gracing the festive boards of those civic rituals which have distinguished English life for generations, Minton China continues nobly to fulfil a noble duty. Peerless product of England herself and of English artistry and craftsmanship, what indeed could provide a happier contribution to such auspicious occasions?

MINTON

The World's Most Beautiful China

MINTONS LTD • STOKE-UPON-TRENT • EST. 1793



Hand-woven
by the
Islanders

WITH matchless skill born of generations of hand-loom weaving the crofters of the Outer Hebrides impart to Harris Tweed a style and individuality you never find elsewhere. The 100% pure virgin Scottish wool from which each yard is made explains its unique softness, comfort and durability.

Look for the Trade Mark on the Cloth and for the Label on the Garment.

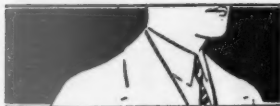


HARRIS TWEED

The Board of Trade accepts the following definition:—"Harris Tweed" means a Tweed made from pure virgin wool produced in Scotland, spun, dyed and finished in the Outer Hebrides and hand-woven by the Islanders at their own homes in the Islands of Lewis, Harris, Uist, Barra and their several purlenances and all known as the Outer Hebrides.

THE HARRIS TWEED ASSOCIATION LTD.

The World's most famous Collar



World-wide fame does not come undeserved. Van Heusen's popularity is due to *comfort* and *style*; they launder well and last longer.



"VAN HEUSEN"

Regd. Trade Mark

SEMI-STIFF COLLARS

Sole Manufacturers: Harding, Tilton and Hartley, Ltd., Taunton, Somerset.

UNRIVALLED AS A HOLIDAY RETREAT

The Branksome Tower Hotel in its wonderful setting of pine trees, offers all that the war-weary or business-jaded man can desire—a cuisine that is internationally famous; an excellent cellar: sea-bathing: and, above all—peace and quiet. Phone Bournemouth 4000.

BRANKSOME TOWER HOTEL

Patronised by Royalty

When your Doctor prescribes

Harrogate, he is following a long-established tradition. For generations, doctors in all parts of the country have advised their patients to take treatment for Rheumatic Complaints at the Royal Baths at

HARROGATE

Reasonable accommodation is assured, but it is advisable to write to:—
H. ROBERTS, Manager, Dept. P.,
Royal Baths, Harrogate.

LAMPORT & HOLT LINE LIMITED

To

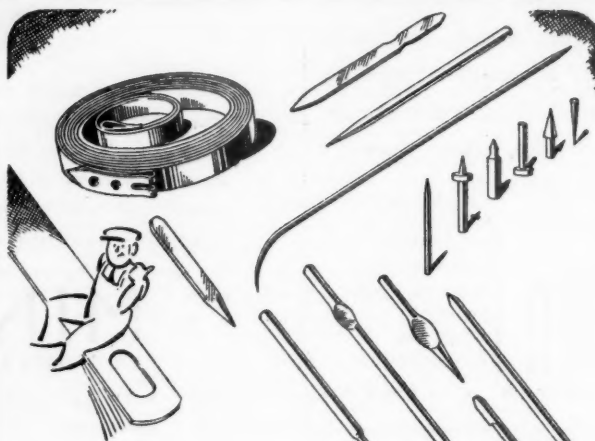
SOUTH AMERICA

Regular Cargo Service between
UNITED KINGDOM, BRAZIL & RIVER PLATE

Regular Cargo and Passenger Service also operates between New York, Brazil and the River Plate.

For particulars apply:—

Royal Liver Building, Liverpool, 3 (Tel.: CENTral 5650); 85 Gracechurch Street, London, E.C.3 (Tel.: Mansion House 7533); or Agents.



GET ACQUAINTED

Precision Pins, Eccentric Pins, Springs for motors, typewriters. Screwdrivers, Rag Teeth, Engineers' Scribers are but a few of the multitude of things made by STEAD. What can we make for you? Have you a problem?—then let's get acquainted now—we're bound to in the end.

Tele: Sheffield 22283 (4 lines)

J. STEAD & CO. LTD. SHEFFIELD 2

Sparklets

(REGD. TRADE MARK)

All available supplies of SPARKLETS BULBS are being distributed as equitably as possible. For the present, please "go easy with the soda" and return empty Bulbs promptly to your usual supplier.



HYGIENIC—CONVENIENT—ECONOMICAL



Old fashioned
Thumbbugs
and
"PASTIME" SWEETS

WARTIME SUPPLIES
Limited in quantity.
Limited to a permitted zone.

AFTER VICTORY
Our familiar packages will re-appear in all parts of the Country

Post-war planning in your home

If your house is fitted with central heating, you should consider installing an Iron Fireman Automatic Coal Stoker after the war.

It would not only do away with all hand-stoking, it would maintain your rooms at a pre-determined temperature day and night and it would save fuel.

For the time being only the Industrial sizes of the Iron Fireman are being made.

Iron Fireman

FIRST AND FOREMOST
Automatic Coal Stokers

Ashwell & Nesbit Limited
Barkby Road, Leicester

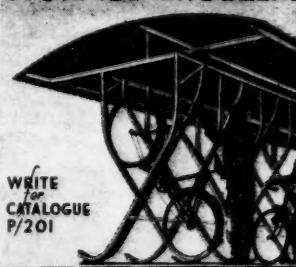
Stairs Blazing

BUT ESCAPE CERTAIN for entire Family even from highest floor if Automatic DAVY is fitted. Average cost £20. Send 1d. stamp for details. JOHN KERR & CO. (MICH) LTD. Northwich, 15, Ches.

DAVY Automatic FIRE ESCAPE



THE SOLUTION OF THE CYCLE STORAGE PROBLEM



WRITE for CATALOGUE P/201

CONSTRUCTORS
CYCLE PARKS
CONSTRUCTORS LIMITED
ERDINGTON BIRMINGHAM



GOOD THINGS come two by two—

*The spirit and the team,
Gold and silver, bread and cheese,
Strawberries and cream;
Health and beauty, cap and bells,
Crinolines and hoops,
Silk and satin, wine and song,
SYMINGTON'S & SOUPS*

W. SYMINGTON & CO. LTD., MARKET HARBOROUGH.



DESIGNER ON THE RACK

Before Pel did something about them, hat and coat racks were of two kinds—either very extravagant in design yet hopelessly inefficient, or very utilitarian but (to put it politely) of a disappointing appearance. In our efforts to develop all forms of tubular steel furniture,

we are determined to give this long-neglected member of the family the attention it deserves. We promise that, when we can work once more to meet civilian requirements, we will introduce something at which you will be proud to 'set your cap.'



PEL LTD · OLDBURY · BIRMINGHAM



**"PLASTICS
are a BIND"**

... AS THE R.A.F. WOULD SAY



BEETLE RESINS for instance. They bind together lots of things—sawdust, fabric, wood, pigments and so on. Sometimes they make moulded articles like electric switches, sometimes they make cardboard weatherproof and tough. They may bind a Mosquito aircraft together or appear as the bond in laminated sheets. And the bond is permanent—once the operation is performed heat or damp has no effect. There's a great future for Beetle bonding—are you interested in the future?



BRITISH INDUSTRIAL PLASTICS LTD · ONE ARGYLL ST · LONDON W1

**SEROCALCIN
PREVENTS COLDS**

SEROCALCIN assists the natural defences of the body to repel organisms that cause colds. It has been prescribed by Doctors for many years.

A 30-day course of Serocalcin tablets gives 3 to 4 months immunity in some 8 out of 10 cases. Existing colds usually respond to Serocalcin in 48 hours.

There are no "drugs" in Serocalcin and no unpleasant reactions. It can be given to children with perfect safety.

The immunizing course of 60 tablets—2 daily for 30 days—costs 8/5½ inc. tax. For existing colds—3 tablets 3 times daily—there is a special 20 tablet pack price 3/4½.

If you suffer from colds, ask your Doctor or Chemist about Serocalcin (Reg. Trade Mark) or send 1d. stamp for booklet "Immunity from Colds"

HARWOODS LABORATORIES LTD. WATFORD, HERTS.



WHEN you awake in the morning bright-eyed, refreshed and full of energy . . . looking forward to the new day with cheerfulness and confidence . . . you can claim to have had a good night's sleep.

If you find such restful, restorative sleep the exception rather than the rule, try the effect of a cup of delicious "Ovaltine" every night at bedtime. Its soothing nourishment will help you to relax, bring sleep more readily and assist in making that sleep completely refreshing and restorative.

Then you will know why "Ovaltine" is acknowledged to be "*The world's best night-cap.*"

Drink delicious

Ovaltine

for Peaceful, Restorative Sleep

Prices in Gt. Britain and N. Ireland,
1/4, 2/4 and 4/- per tin

P.615A.



No coupons . . . no queues quality guaranteed . . . and the longer you keep them the greater their value! What are they? Savings

If you already hold your quota of 500 Certificates (issued at any price under £1) you can still save the Certificate way by acquiring up to 250 £1 Certificates.

Certificates. What do they cost? 15/- each. Where can I buy them? Through your local Savings Group or from any Post Office or Trustee Savings Bank.

Buy and hold NATIONAL SAVINGS CERTIFICATES

★Every 15/- Savings Certificate grows in value to 20/6 in 10 years. This profit is free of Income Tax. You can get your money back at any time with all profit earned to date.

Issued by the National Savings Committee